

# DRAMATICS

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An Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

Vol. XXX, No. 7

APRIL, 1959

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## STUDENT-RATE, NOT CUT-RATE

By C. ROBERT KASE

## WHAT DO YOU SAY?

By WILLIAM E.  
UTTERBACK

## HONOR SOCIETIES AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL

By PAUL F. OPP

## DIRECTING THE PAGEANT

CHARLES R. TRUMBO  
and POLLYANN

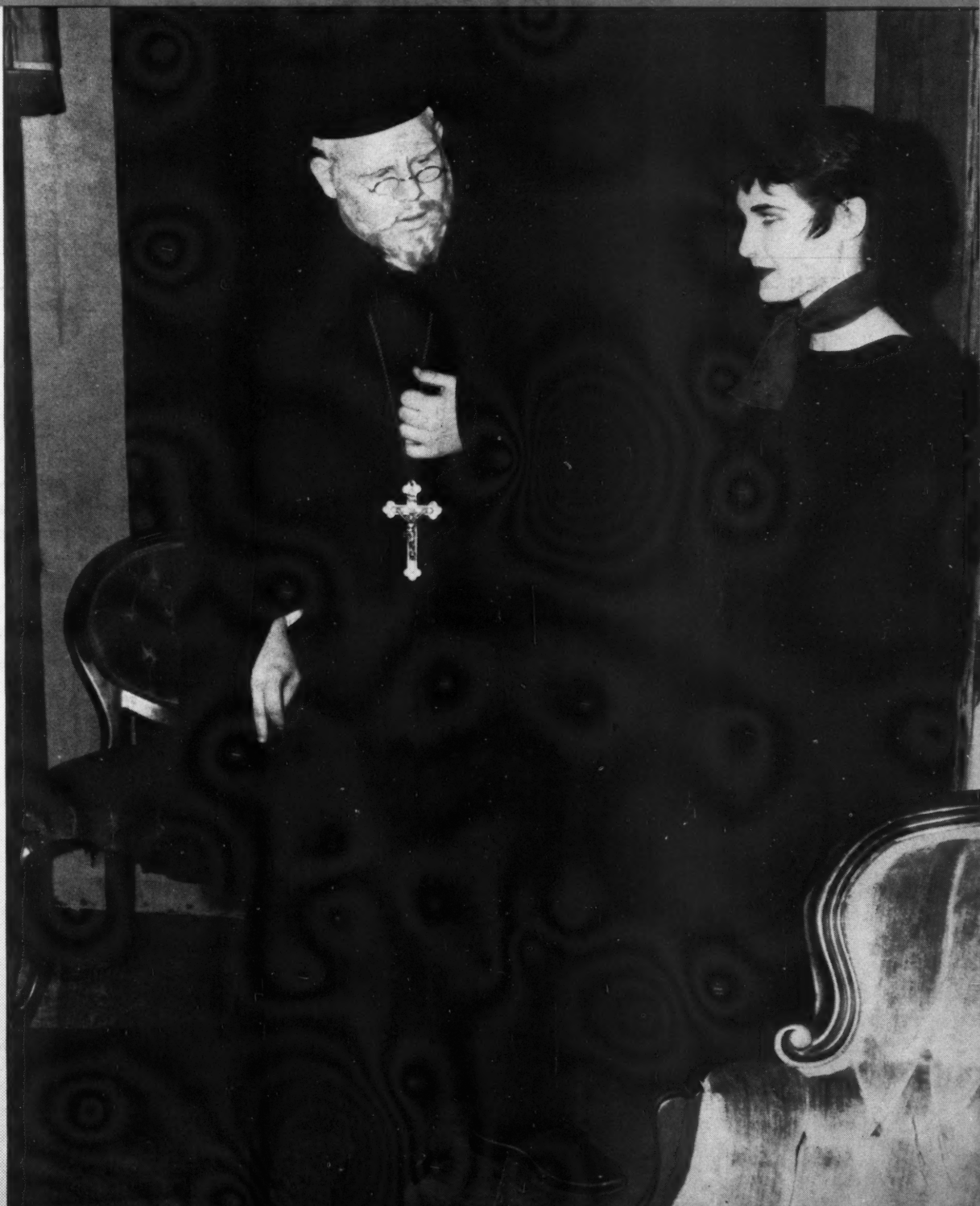
## THE MUSICAL PLAY: PART II

By DELWIN B.  
DUSENBURY

## BEST OF BROADWAY

By CHARLES L. JONES

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The story, in comic terms, of the production of a play in a high school, and the action takes place on the stage and in the auditorium, during rehearsals and after the presentation. Among the myriad comic obstacles with which poor young Miss Burgess is faced (it is her first play) are the following: a grouchy janitor with a sharp tongue, the disappearance of the playbooks the first day of rehearsal, a set of comically crossed-up high school romances with a capital R, a charming young heroine who becomes stage-struck, her bewildered boy-friend, a campus "actor" with a swollen head, the disgruntled athlete feeling out of place as an actor, a flamboyant professional actress with advice, a banker's daughter driven to theft and dirty tricks by her father's ambitions — and, perhaps most unexpected of all, a romance for young Miss Burgess herself! The solution to the mounting complications sets forth a worthwhile theme that will further satisfy any audience.

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# As I See It . . .

## TEN WAYS TO KILL YOUR TROUPE

1. Always have something else to do at meeting time and at show time.
2. Criticize destructively your officers, membership, and sponsor.
3. Refuse to hold office since its easier to find fault than to be at fault.
4. Get angry if you are not appointed on a committee; if appointed, always be *too busy* to serve.
5. When the President asks for help, keep quiet; later tell others what should have been done.
6. When a few Thespians really help the school's theater program, complain that a clique is running the show.
7. Always talk of the glorious past; never point to the challenging future.
8. When casts are chosen for the plays, spread the word about "apple polishers" and teacher's "pets."
9. Never encourage new students to participate in your school's theater program.
10. Never attend any of the shows; better still, set up home parties on the night of the show to entice others from attending.

THERE IS ALWAYS "ONE" IN EVERY ORGANIZATION—EAGER TO BECOME A MEMBER, A DEAD HEAD AFTER MEMBERSHIP.



Members of the 1958 Summer Session in Dramatic Art at the University of North Carolina in a scene from *The Red Velvet Gout*. The five-week session for high school students is held each summer by the Carolina Playmakers.

## SUMMER SCHOOLS AND CAMPS

IN selecting a summer theater school, a summer theater stock company, or summer theater camp, one must bear in mind only one criterion: How much participation in actual plays will be available for me? There is only one way to reach a decision—ask to see the programs of other years and then check to see how many high school students were selected for the casts. Naturally if the school you attend has professional actors, community theater personnel, and college and university students, you, as a high school student, must realize that your chances for actual participation are slim indeed. Thus if working on committees, but more important, observing the experienced is what you want in preference to actual participation, that school open to all must be your choice.

I strongly recommend high school students *still in school* to attend the high school summer schools held annually throughout the country. These schools, which limit their attendance only

to high school students, are listed with our school advertisements monthly. They are recommended, but you, student and parents, must do the investigating and then make your final selection. What may prove satisfactory to one student will not necessarily be satisfactory to all.

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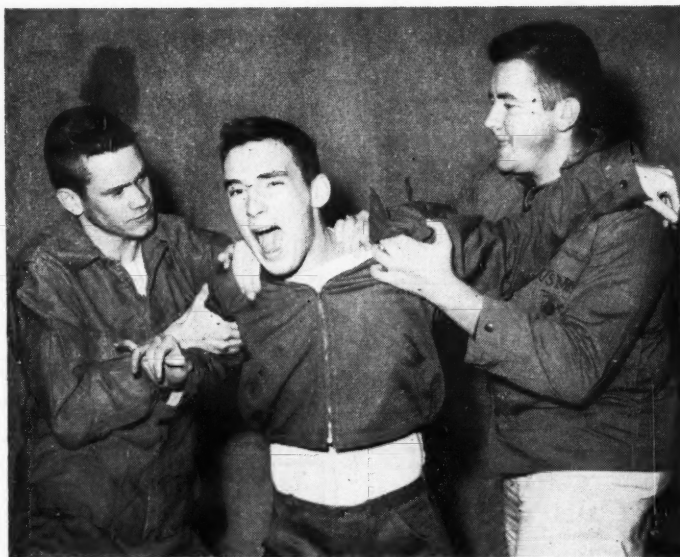
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Thespian."—Mrs. Clifford Ott, Sponsor, Troupe 241, Fonda, Iowa, Community High School.

"Although we have belonged to National Thespian Society only since January, 1958, I want you to know how very much we feel we have gained from our membership in that time. Interest has grown considerably both for students who were interested before and for those who were not. The students even seem to take a great deal more pride in their endeavors now. I wish to thank you!"—Mrs. James Peterson, Sponsor, Troupe 1677, Streator, Illinois, Township High School.

## OUT SAN JOSE WAY

IF I were near San Jose, California, State College during the next two months, I certainly would attend their three remaining productions: *The Confidential Clerk* (Jack Neeson, Director): April 10, 11, 15-18; *King Midas and the Golden Touch* (John Kerr, Director): April 30, May 1, 2; *Lute Song* (Paul Davee, Director): May 22, 23, 27-30.



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All the action takes place on a wooded hilltop overlooking the banks of the Rhine River, which separates the men from Switzerland. Though the setting lends itself to elaboration, our set was comparatively simple, so simple that we were able to move it to a neighboring school during the noon hour, and re-assembled it, while the cast put on their make-up, after school.

The lighting, though not difficult, presents a challenge. The play begins in the late afternoon and proceeds into nightfall. During the last half of the play, the stage is lit only by moonlight. At the end of the play, after a momentary fade out, a spotlight reveals a wooden and hastily-made cross stuck in the small embankment across the rear of the stage, the only relic of the fierce and heroic scene that has been witnessed.

Six males compose the cast, and all of them, with the possible exception of one, have a substantial and important part to play. The most difficult is that of the lieutenant, since he is involved in two struggles, one within himself, the other with men who misunderstand and hate him. To the lieutenant belongs the task of winning the love and sympathy of the audience while making the hate of his companions on stage seem logical. The part demands careful casting. Fortunately, in our own production, our choice accomplished the task beautifully.

We think that the play is ready for publication, and hope that other schools will find it suitable for their own production. If one is looking for a thought provoking play, a one-act play with much more depth than the ordinary, we feel confident that he will find what he is looking for in *The Cross on Hill 700*.



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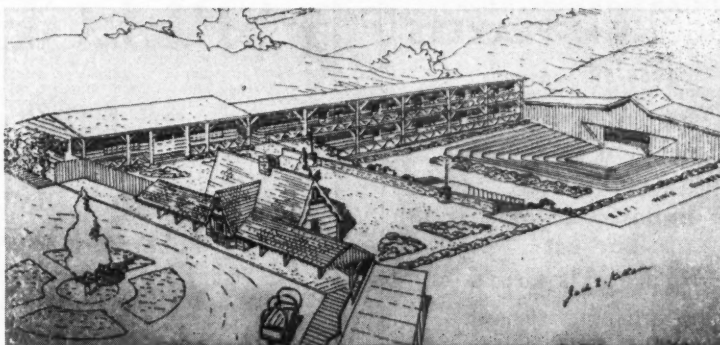
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IN answer to the question often raised by our graduating seniors concerning theater honor societies in our colleges and universities, I asked Dr. Paul F. Opp, one of the three founders of the National Thespian Society, executive secretary of Alpha Psi Omega, and head of the theater department at Fairmont State College, Fairmont, W. Va., to write an enlightening article about the more outstanding and better known national dramatic arts honor fraternities. His article, *Honor Societies at the College Level*, is his gracious answer to my request. These theater fraternities, like Thespians, require work in the college theater to qualify for membership.

TROUPE 1075, Sikeston, Missouri, High School, Martha H. Jones, Sponsor, is celebrating its Tenth Thespian Anniversary throughout this school year. To all members of the troupe and to Miss Jones, our sincere congratulations for a job well done. Miss Jones touches briefly the highlights of theater at her school during the past ten years in *Troupe 1075's Tenth Anniversary*.

WITH the Broadway road shows facing financial crises, we again have a golden opportunity to sell our reduced student rate ticket plan to local managers and the New York producers. They are really "crying for help" in attendance. And this plan can be done as it is being done in Delaware. Read *Student-Rate, Not Cut-Rate* by C. Robert Kase, University of Delaware, and then go to work on your local manager. You may be able to see Broadway theater at reasonable prices if you follow Dr. Kase's suggestions. You must, however, work out your own local plan.

WILLIAM E. Utterback, Department of Speech, Ohio State University, Columbus, in his article, *What Do You Say?*, stresses the value of the art of conversation. I like the following quotations: "Being a good conversationalist is one of the marks of the educated man"; "But it is better to shout at each other than to shoot at each other"; and "men with clenched fists can't shake hands." How well do you speak with your friends? Speech and theater will create a better understanding than all the sputniks, rockets, bombs, and satellites.

THAT directing the pageant is a very difficult job is stressed by Mr. Trumbo in his seventh article of his series on pageantry; the theater of Rodgers and Hammerstein is the theme of Dr. Dusenbury's *The Musical Play: Part II*.

WANDA Bachman, who designed the production of *Pinocchio*, presented at Upper Darby, Pa., Senior High School, and as Stage Manager developed the technical devices, reports in this month's Children's Theater article not only the methods used but the reactions of the children. Thespian Bachman is a Merit Rating Scholarship semi-finalist; she received the citation of the National Council of Teachers of English for her writing; she was a member of the high school workshop in theater at the University of Denver, Summer, 1958; she is treasurer and one of the most versatile members of Troupe 1000.

DR. Blank's plays this month are really outstanding: *Macbeth*, *Onions in the Stew*, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, and *Dr. Hudson's Secret Journal* certainly suggest excellent possibilities for next year. Let Dr. Blank's suggestions help you with your play selections. Other sponsors liked them so well that they produced them.

PROF. Friederich concludes his excellent reviews of books on acting and directing; pictures of our Thespians in action illustrate the progress of the high school theater; and our Thespians continue with their chatter of their local activities. Here is another issue of pic-

tures, good reading, and certainly attractive advertisements.

CHARLES L. Jones, formerly Missouri's Regional Director, now Regional Director of Eastern New York, is our latest addition to our editorial staff. Living now on Long Island, Mr. Jones will review the *Best of Broadway* for the high school theater. His first review is of *Tall Story*. Mr. Jones is co-sponsor of Troupe 861, Port Jefferson, New York, High School.

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# STUDENT-RATE, not CUT-RATE

By C. ROBERT KASE

THEATER in Delaware is at mid-season. It is January and already nearly one thousand high school and college students have attended performances of seven New York plays which have come to the Playhouse in Wilmington. They have paid \$1.50 for tickets for evening performances (\$1.30 for matinees) in a theater where the price range is from \$2.10 to \$4.85. In many instances they have sat in the best locations in the house.

All this has been made possible by the Delaware Student Rate Theater Ticket Project, which has been in continuous operation since 1952. During that period high school and college students in this area have been able to attend at reduced rates the dozen or more plays which come to the Playhouse annually. They have been able to see among others *Sunrise at Campobello*, *No Time for Sergeants*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Auntie Mame*, *The Pajama Game*, *Bus Stop*, *Damn Yankees*, *The Bad Seed*, *St. Joan*, *The Rainmaker*, *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial*, *Wonderful Town*, *The Shrike*, and *The Crucible*.

There has been satisfaction with the results of the project among all the major participants: the Playhouse management, the producers, and the teachers and students. Students in Delaware are no longer priced out of the theater. By placing the theater tickets within the range of their restricted pocketbooks, the project has not only made it possible for hundreds of school and college students to see good shows by professional companies, but it is also building a theater for the future audience. The Playhouse box office already recognizes among its regular patrons (at standard prices) many of those who only a few years ago bought the student rate tickets.

The Project operates very simply. The Playhouse Management allocates a certain number of tickets for each play. Normally there will be approximately seventy-five for opening night and one hundred-fifty for the Saturday matinee. A postcard is sent to the director of dramatics at each school by the Playhouse announcing the production and the allotment. Each school is instructed to call the University of Delaware Dramatic Center for an assignment of the number of seats it desires from the total allotment. No commitments can be made to students until after the Dramatic Center assignment has been given. This prevents overselling the allotment.

After the approval has been given, the student simply appears at the Box Office an hour prior to curtain time with some kind of official identification to

show that he is a student and entitled to a ticket. On the payment of the student rate he is then given a ticket, which may be for any part of the house because the management allocates a certain number of tickets rather than a block in a particular location. Essentially therefore the student is purchasing an unsold ticket.

In order that the management may be able to supply tickets to its regular customers if there is a greater demand than expected, it has the privilege of withdrawing the allocation at any time. However, it also agrees to honor any assignment of tickets made up to this time. In practice, this option has very seldom been exercised.

Teachers are responsible for seeing that the student rate privilege is not abused by students purchasing tickets for adults or by students failing to pick up tickets assigned to them. There have been few if any reports of abuses.

Under the Delaware plan the privilege of purchasing tickets at student rates is extended to any teacher who arranges a theater party of ten or more students.

As mentioned above, everyone is very much pleased with the Project, and there is growing interest in it among students every year. Already this season nearly a thousand students have bought tickets, which is the same number who participated during the whole of last year. Of the number this year, over seven hundred were students from twelve different high schools, one of which is located almost forty miles from Wilmington.

The reader may be interested to know how this Project came to be established, for it didn't just happen.

Back in 1952 I attended a meeting in Wilmington of a committee organized to sell subscriptions to the Theater Guild-American Theater Society touring season so that Wilmington could be included in its itinerary. There was much complaint about the apathy of the public and lack of interest in theater. I ventured the comment that over the past fifteen or twenty years there had been no consistent effort to build a theater audience by making it possible for high school and college students to attend theater. Actually the high cost of theater tickets had priced the young people right out of the theater, and they were staying out. Of course there had been sporadic attempts to woo them with plays which the general public did not support. But young people did not relish being offered what others did not want.

I argued that there are always a good number of unsold seats for almost every production. Any alert press agent starts



You Can't Take It with You, Troupe 803, Bennett High School, Buffalo, New York, Daniel M. Kublitz, Sponsor

talking about a "hit" when attendance reaches 80% of capacity. Even when plays are doing 95% capacity and management is dusting off the SRO signs, there are a good number of unsold seats. At 95% of capacity the Wilmington Playhouse for instance still has three hundred unsold seats out of a total of six thousand available for a five-performance run. Why not, I urged, use these tickets to help build a theater audience for the future?

The suggestion was warmly received both by the New York producers present and by the Playhouse management, and I was invited to meet with them and work out the details of some plan for a Student Rate Theater Ticket Plan.

It became obvious from the first that the cooperation of not only the Playhouse but of the individual producers was required. The Playhouse management was anxious to cooperate from the beginning. It is operated by the DuPont Company as a public service. However, the continued satisfaction of the Playhouse management with the Ticket Project is significant, because the DuPont Company is not known for retaining its association with unprofitable projects.

However, the Playhouse was only one party to the agreement. Before tickets could be sold at reduced rates, each individual producer bringing a show to the Playhouse had to concur. At first, this agreement was difficult to get, for many of the advance men for the shows associated the student rate project with cut-rate tickets and papering the house. We pointed out that this was a reduction for only one segment of the audience, and was actually an adjustment of price

(Continued on Page 31)

# What Do You Say?

By WILLIAM E. UTTERBACK

WHILE silence is golden, the road to popularity and esteem is not paved with gold. Whether on a date, at a party, on the street corner, or around the drinking fountain at school or office, the person who talks easily and well is liked and respected. And properly so; he is useful to others as well as to himself. And what he has to offer cannot be bought at the drug store or the haberdashery and put on; it is a part of the kind of person he is. Being a good conversationalist is one of the marks of the educated man.

It is also one of his duties, for we live in a democratic society, and democracy is government by talk. This means of course talk by our political leaders from the platform and over the air. But it means also talk among ourselves as we consider what we have heard and make up our minds on public issues, and it means much informal talk in committee rooms and conferences at the local, state, national, and international levels. Even at the United Nations more important talk probably occurs in private conversation and in small conferences than in the formal debates of the General Assembly and the Security Council. The Berlin Blockade was lifted as the result of a casual conversation between the American and Russian delegates. Not all of this talk is friendly; indeed some of it is bitter and violent. But it is better to shout at each other than to shoot at each other. The right to participate in informal talk in private conversation and in committees and conferences is as much a part of our democratic heritage as the right to speak from the public platform. All of us should play our part in this process of collective decision.

In conversation we are sometimes talking with one person, sometimes with several, sometimes with a small group.

And our purpose may be to get acquainted and have fun, to understand each other better, to influence each other, or to solve a problem together. But regardless of the number with whom we talk or the purpose for which we talk, our effectiveness depends very much on our attitudes and habits in conversation. Some people seem naturally to have the attitudes and habits that make for effective participation; others must take some effort to cultivate them.

One attitude essential to good conversation is that of interest in other people. To be other-centered rather self-centered unlocks the door of conversation and in doing so relieves us of the self-consciousness that may otherwise embarrass us in company. What does the other person like? What does he think and believe? What does he feel? What does he do in his spare time? What does he plan to do in the future? These are matters of the greatest importance to him, and he probably likes to talk about them. The reason some people do not interest us usually is that we do not know enough about them. No one is uninteresting when we know what makes him tick.

Another attitude worth cultivating is the sympathetic regard for the other person's sensibilities that we call courtesy. Is he touchy and easily upset about some matters? Probably we need not discuss them with him. Why carelessly and clumsily prod people where it hurts? What is offensive to one person may of course not be so to another. Among people of our own age whom we know well we can make remarks that may seem obnoxious to an older person. And much depends upon the occasion. A remark that may seem appropriate over a bottle of coke at the drug store may be out of place when the family is entertaining elderly relatives.

One can of course be politely courteous without being really friendly, and an atmosphere of good will is essential. Anger especially chills conversation. An Egyptian student at an American uni-

versity once made the following interesting report on a social evening: "I spent last evening with several other Egyptian students who had just arrived in this country. Our talk was of international politics, and I was shocked by the way they conducted the conversation. All talked at the same time, shouting at the tops of their voices and shaking their fists angrily. Then it dawned on me that I used to do exactly the same thing but that going to college in America had cured me of it. Here we learn how to talk over our differences without getting angry." Perhaps one of the most important things he learned in America was that men with clenched fists can't shake hands.

A fourth useful attitude is the spirit of inquiry as distinguished from that of advocacy. To be sure we sometimes engage in conversation for the purpose of influencing others, but more often our purpose should be primarily to understand rather than to oppose each other. To be too bent upon defending our own view is unfortunate; the mental posture of advocacy closes the mind so that we no longer listen open-mindedly and judiciously to what others are saying. We do better to avoid the argumentative tone of voice, to forego the pleasure of contradicting, and to feel that our first purpose is to understand why the other person thinks as he does, carefully weighing and considering his arguments as if we were still making up our own minds — as indeed we usually should be doing. Eventually our companion will probably wish to understand our own thinking too, and we will not hesitate to express our views. But much of the time we should be the open-minded and sympathetic listener rather than the confident advocate.

Our attitudes then have much to do with how profitably and acceptably we participate in conversation. So also do what may be called our conversational habits. The following simple rules suggest habits worth cultivating.

*Speak-up!* In conversation we are

(Continued on Page 30)



Stage setting for *Penny*, Troupe 59, Danville, Illinois, High School, Mary Miller, Sponsor



# Honor Societies at the College Level

By PAUL F. OPP

SOME Thespians will be interested in knowing about the national honor societies in dramatics that they will find upon entering college. Approximately four hundred colleges and two hundred junior colleges have national honor societies to recognize work in theater and the drama. Many others have local groups that require outstanding work or several years of participation in dramatic productions before being awarded the pin or key that signifies membership. Some of these organizations are very old and hallowed by tradition. Even though theater offerings have been completely modernized, some universities still stage their productions under these old drama association names like "The Red Masque," "The Queen's Players," "Sock and Buskin," "Mustard and Cheese Club," or "Pen, Paint, and Pretzels." Jose Ferrer in a speech before one of the Thespian conventions stated that he had received all his academic training in acting and directing in the Princeton Triangle Club.

With the spread of the Little Theater movement in the early 1920's the production of college plays began to make definite progress in quality and quantity. Plays were now presented by the speech department rather than by literary societies that often presented plays to raise money. Departments of speech also added courses in play production, acting, and directing. A drama student, interested in dramatics and entering college today, will find either one of three well-organized national honor societies in the college theater: The National Collegiate Players, Theta Alpha Phi, or Alpha Psi Omega. The object of this article is to inform the student about these three societies and several others devoted to the professional theater: Zeta Phi Eta

and Phi Beta. These two societies admit women only—women looking forward to a career in the theater or entertainment field. These five organizations are members of the Advisory council of the American Educational Theater Association.

The National Collegiate Players was a result of the union in June 1922 of the Pi Epsilon Delta drama honor society at the University of Wisconsin and Associated University Players of the University of Illinois. This honor society in the college theater has 51 chapters widely scattered across the nation from George Washington University in the East to the University of Oregon in the West. The magazine of the society is *PLAYERS MAGAZINE*, and the emblem is a key bearing the masks of comedy and tragedy and the letters Pi Epsilon Delta. The total membership is about 7,500.

Theta Alpha Phi was organized at a national convention of the National Association of Teachers of Speech in Chicago, December 19, 1919. From the six original colleges in the founding group this national recognition society in the amateur theater has grown to forty-nine chapters in American colleges and universities and one junior college. As expressed in the constitution, the society aims to increase interest, stimulate creativeness, and foster artistic achievement in the allied arts and crafts of the theater. To be eligible for membership, as in Thespians, a student must have earned a specified number of points in acting, directing, or working on stage. The magazine is *THE CUE* and the emblem is a mask bearing Greek letters of the organization, worn as a badge or a key.

Alpha Psi Omega will be encountered on the campuses of 520 colleges and was founded at Fairmont State College in

1925. Two hundred of these colleges are in the Delta Psi Omega division, which admits both two-year colleges and four-year professional schools. This division and the National Thespians were sponsored by Alpha Psi Omega in 1929. For the first year and a half of its existence the national office of Thespians was conducted from the Alpha Psi Omega headquarters at Fairmont State College. Since the Alpha Psi Omega plan of organization and requirements for membership were carried out in the National Thespian Society, Thespians are already familiar with it. The emblem of Alpha Psi Omega is a monogram of the Greek letters, and the magazine is *THE PLAYBILL*. Alpha Psi Omega has two chapters in Canadian universities.

Girls entering college may not encounter the honor societies named above, but two professional speech arts fraternities, Zeta Phi Eta and Phi Beta. Both of these national groups were founded at Northwestern University. Zeta Phi Eta was founded Oct. 10, 1893, and now has 32 chapters and a total membership of 8,000. This society has a loan and scholarship fund for students interested in graduate work in theater. Phi Beta recognizes both theater and music and was founded on May 5, 1912, and has 36 active chapters, several of which are in junior colleges. The Phi Beta official magazine is *THE BATON*.

In conclusion it is worthy of note that speech and theater in most colleges is so specialized that it is no longer under the English department, but a field for specialized study in which a student may elect the speech arts as a major or minor. The publications of the college honor societies contain many valuable articles on play production that high school students will find helpful in the preparation of term papers and reports, and this fact suggests that high school libraries may take note of the publications of these college societies and supply them for the students in the high school drama courses.



The King and I, Troupe 132, Oceanside, N. Y., Sr. High School, Jim Drommond, Sponsor



# Best of Broadway

By CHARLES L. JONES

THE current season on Broadway has offered theatergoers some of the finest dramas in many years in such soul searching, introspective, and provocative plays as *J.B.*, *Look Homeward, Angel*, and *A Touch of the Poet*. It would appear, however, according to the current trend, that most of the playwrights are so busy stuffing us with food for thought that they are completely neglecting another very important and desirable element of character building ... a sense of humor.

Apparently aware of the need of humor for humor's sake in more Broadway shows, the beloved playwright team of Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse couldn't have chosen a more appropriate time to invade Broadway with a fresh, energetic, and hilariously funny situation comedy entitled *Tall Story*, for which I predict a happy future both on Broadway and the amateur stage.

*Tall Story* is based on the novel, *The Homecoming Game*, by Howard Nemerov, and nothing could be more typically American and up-to-date than a background of college life, romance, and sports which this play provides.

With the biggest basketball game of the season coming up at good old Custer College somewhere in the Middle West, a crisis develops when star player Ray Blent is approached via telephone to "fix" the game for a tidy sum of money (which we know all college students can use).

When Ray finds \$1500 cash, which has been stuffed into his overcoat pocket mysteriously, he knows the "hoods" mean business. He decides deliberately to flunk his science and ethics exams, thereby becoming ineligible to play in the big game and at the same time stav-

ing off the wrath of the would-be "fixers."

Providing many of the comedy's best laughs are Professors Osman and Solomon, who flunked the player. Descended upon like the Frankenstein monster by angry villagers in a late movie, the poor professors are pursued and pressured by everyone from the student council to the college president to change their minds and allow Blent to play. Being a Professor of Ethics, Solomon practices what he preaches and refuses to budge an inch on the somewhat vague moral issue in question, until Blent finally admits he flunked on purpose.

In probably the funniest scene in the comedy and also a classic piece of horseplay, both professors rush to the locker room to administer make-up exams to Blent while good old Custer is losing its shirt out on the court. The situation is one which could only take place on a stage with such zany exam questions as "Who discovered the Einstein Theory?"

*Tall Story* develops at a tornado-like intensity with a very calm, almost dull first act as compared with the tremendous vitality and exuberance of the last two acts which left your reviewer somewhat physically exhausted from laughter.

The play does not have to rely on an established "star" for its box-office appeal, and, as a matter of fact, it would be extremely difficult in this play to attempt to select one individual as being the star performer.

Choice roles are played, for the most part, by a well experienced and very capable cast headed by Hans Conried, Marc Connelly, Marian Winters, and Robert Elston.

Mr. Conried, a veteran of radio, TV, and some 100 films, is cast in the role of Ethics Professor Solomon. He is a past master of provoking more laughter with his facial expressions than his lines. He played Professor Kropotkin in the TV series, *My Friend Irma*, with Marie Wilson a number of years.

Marc Connelly as Professor Osman is



Photo: Eileen Darby — Graphic House  
Mason Adams and Robert Elston in *Tall Story*, now playing at the Belasco Theater. This new comedy by Lindsay and Crouse takes place on a college campus.

better known to the American public as a successful playwright rather than an actor. He has penned such notable scripts as *The Green Pastures*, *Dulcy*, and *Having a Wonderful Time*.

Marian Winters has the role of the gallant wife of Professor Solomon. Because of the nature of the part and her exceptional ability in handling it, she nearly emerges as the heroine of the play despite any intentions to the contrary. Miss Winters has played notable parts in such Broadway successes as *Auntie Mame*, *I Am a Camera*, and *Detective Story*.

The role of the star basketball player, Ray Blent, is played to perfection by a newcomer to Broadway, Robert Elston, who may need a rest cure at the close of the show's run. As the script or the director, Herman Shumlin, demanded he plays the part with such excitable fury and over-abundance of energy, he seems as if he might have a nervous breakdown at any moment. Besides acting, he is earning his doctorate in theater arts at New York University.

Producer of *Tall Story*, in association with Robert Weiner, is Emmett Rogers. His production of *No Time for Sergeants* with Maurice Evans and starring Andy Griffith has become a comedy classic.

Russel Crouse and Howard Lindsay, the playwrights, are known for a long list of successful Broadway shows. All theatergoers will remember their *Life with Father*, which ran seven years on Broadway, as well as the Pulitzer Prize-winning comedy-drama, *State of the Union*.

Although the play uses five different wagon sets against one large backdrop of the Custer College campus, I have no doubt the staging requirements will be simplified a great deal when released for amateur production. Here indeed is a play which when released for amateur production may take its place with *What a Life* and *Time Out for Ginger* in popularity.



Photo: Eileen Darby — Graphic House  
Marc Connelly, Marian Winters, and Hans Conried in the new hit play at the Belasco, *Tall Story*, by Lindsay and Crouse

# Directing the Pageant

By CHARLES R. TRUMBO  
and POLLYANN

**A**N army needs a general. A country needs a president. Even the smallest group requires leadership. No pageant could be produced without this supreme authority. As Pageant Director you are this authority. All unsolved problems come to you. Your shoulders must be broad enough to carry them. You must encourage the tired and doubting Episode Director to stand firm before the one who is trying to take the "spotlight." You must constantly visualize the pageant as a whole, remembering that no one episode is more important than the other.

As Pageant Director, you have also been busy while all your episode directors and committees were getting organized and starting rehearsals.

Pageant acting is more allied to pantomime than to any other branch of drama. If Greek drama were revived as it was originally presented, we would notice a close resemblance to modern pageantry.

Dramatic ability is a secondary qualification in a pageant actor. Harry Davis, the director of the professional pageant-drama, *Unto These Hills*, at Cherokee, North Carolina, says that in keeping with the original flavor of these plays, the acting company is usually drawn from local sources. Unlike the summer stock productions, the emphasis is always on the group rather than the individual. For this reason the capable amateur actor is ordinarily preferred to the Broadway or Hollywood star. The professional, through no fault of his own, is frequently a misfit in this type of theater. His insistent emphasis on individual personality and talent is out of tune with the group spirit. His subtle

shadings of voice and bodily movement are likely to be wasted in the great sweep of the outdoor theater, where bigness and simplicity reign.

With these qualifications in mind, it is one of your duties as the Pageant Director to pick from a group of people the ones best suited to pageant acting. Your work will be easier if when selecting the cast you are able to find persons of the right type and of approximately the same age as the characters they are to portray. Highly trained professionals may be able to play a variety of character parts, but in pageantry you are dealing with local people who perhaps have never made a stage appearance. Although your cast may be composed primarily of students, you can still choose those who come nearer looking the part. The selection of persons who look the part involves a certain amount of study on your part, as director, of old photographs or painted portraits of the early settlers of your community. Quite often in pageantry the direct descendants of the former founders of the community are helping to re-enact the local history. With careful study of old photographs and portraits, the family resemblance may reveal to you that a living replica of your character, even a blood relation may be ready and willing to impersonate his great-great grandfather in the local historical pageant.

While casting your characters, keep in mind the age of the character at the time he is to be portrayed. However, if John Smith was nineteen years old at the time he helped establish your community, don't deliberately cast a relative in the role if this living relative is age seventy-five. Better use someone else even though he is not related to the original character.

After the problem of casting is over, the individual scripts with the lines and cues are given to each episode director

and members of his cast who have speaking parts. The pageant script is unpublished and cannot be ordered from your favorite play catalogue. The Pageant Chairman has made arrangements to have all the parts typed. The only copy of the full and complete script in its complete and detailed form has been typed and is in your hands. It contains all the words of the narrator or herald. It also has a complete description of each episode and the lines of the characters in each episode. Each Episode Director is given a complete and detailed copy of the episode that he is to direct personally. The copy of the episode is exactly like the one that you have in the entire pageant script. Along with the Episode Director's script he has been given the "script parts" for those few who have speaking parts in his episode. These "parts," as they are called, are made up of "lines and sides" like those rented from professional music publishers for your school operetta. These consist of the lines of the actor preceded by the "cue" (the three or four words that precede his speech which enable him to know when to speak his lines). The cues are preceded by a line of dots or dashes to denote the deletion of part of the sentence. For example, let us take a few lines from the pageant, *Abraham Lincoln: Rail-Splitter* by Constance D'Arcy Mackaye. The part is that of Lincoln:

.....our next debate.  
(speaking from outer doorway, ax on shoulder)  
Who said debate?

.....know you're hungry.  
Thank you, I will. (Puts by ax and goes toward table) Hungry! I feel half-starved! And my muscles are as stiff as boards. (Turns) Here, Tom, I'm a fine host - neglecting my guests! There's the corn-popper, and (diving hand into cupboard and bringing out a bag) there's the corn!

.....fixed it for you.  
It's fine, Nancy, thank you. (Goes back to table and half-smiles, dryly-humorous) And the best thing about it is that there's enough of it!



With only the sky for a canopy, thousands saw the thrilling out-door drama, *Wilderness Road*, during its fourth season at Berea, Kentucky.



## BROADWAY LINE-UP

ANTA—*J. B.*, James Daly, Christopher Plummer, Raymond Massey. Drama.

BELASCO—*Tall Story*, Hans Conried, Marc Connelly, Marian Winters, Robert Elston. Comedy.

BOOTH—*Two for the Seesaw*, Anne Bancroft, Dana Andrews. Comedy.

BROADWAY—*West Side Story*, Carol Lawrence, Larry Kert. Musical.

CORT—*Sunrise at Campobello*, Ralph Bellamy, Mary Fickett. Drama.

46TH ST.—*Redhead*, Gwen Verdon. Musical.

HAYES—*Touch of the Poet*, Helen Hayes, Eric Portman, Betty Field, Kim Stanley. Drama.

HELLINGER—*My Fair Lady*, Edward Mulhare, Sally Ann Howes. Musical comedy.

LONGACRE—*Pleasure of His Company*, Cyril Ritchard, Cornelia Otis Skinner, Charlie Ruggles, Walter Abel. Comedy.

MAJESTIC—*Music Man*, Robert Preston, Barbara Cook. Musical comedy.

NATIONAL—*Once More with Feeling*, Joseph Cotton, Arlene Francis. Comedy.

PLYMOUTH—*Marriage-Go-Round*, Charles Boyer, Claudette Colbert. Comedy.

ROYALE—*La Plume de Ma Tante*, Robert Dhery. Revue.

ST. JAMES—*Flower Drum Song*. Musical comedy.

SHUBERT—*Majority of One*, Cedric Hardwicke, Gertrude Berg. Comedy.

(To John) Well, John, how are you?

.....in the woods?  
No, I didn't see any bears in the woods, but I brought home some nuts for you! (Gives them)

Your stage directions will probably not be as detailed as these because you want to leave some ingenuity and originality to the episode directors. The Episode Director may have just as good an idea as you and perhaps better as to how his episode is to appear. Your job is to see to it that he does it and that it is acceptable!

The Pageant Chairman should arrange for an indoor rehearsal hall for each of the pageant's episodes, if possible. After the school's auditorium and gymnasium have each been assigned to an episode director, every other available hall in the community, such as the Women's Club, all lodge halls, American Legion Hall, should be arranged for if needed. It is possible to work out a schedule so that more than one episode may be rehearsed in the same hall; available time of director and actors will determine this.

One of your tasks as the overall director is coordinating the background music for the entire action of the pageant with the Musical Director. It must be borne in mind at all times that the pageant music is not a public concert; it must always be of secondary importance to the visual spectacle of the pageant. Both the dramatic action and the dance numbers must take precedence over all else. Orchestrations or original compositions written especially for the production must be cut to fit the timing of the dramatic action or dances. You must determine whether or not the music that has been selected or composed has the proper mood for the action or dance numbers that it is to accompany. During the spoken lines the music should sink nearly to silence, then swell again as the action without speech is resumed. You

might even have a "listening meeting" for all your episode directors, to make sure that all concerned approve of the musical score. Throughout the pageant the music should support and intensify the emotional appeal of the pageant and its stage pictures. If an orchestra is not available, recorded music may be used effectively.

Observe and assist each Episode Director with his action and spoken lines until you are satisfied that things are under control; then arrange for your Costumer and Technical Director to hold a costume rehearsal for each individual episode cast. This rehearsal is not for spoken lines and stage action, but is a time for trying on the costumes. Alterations for some of the costumes by the Costumer and her committee will be necessary. The Technical Director will give his final approval after observing the costumes under colored lights. Let the actors try on the costumes and walk around to get the feel of wearing them.

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rehearsal can be held with many advantages. However, this is exceedingly difficult to accomplish out-of-doors without sufficient policing from ushers and ticket-takers who ordinarily will not be on duty until the opening night of the pageant.

If the episodes have been well rehearsed; if the characters with speaking parts know their lines and can be understood; if the Technical Director, the Electrician, know exactly what lights to use and with what episodes to use them; and the Musical Director is keenly aware



Paul Green's prize-winning outdoor drama, *Wilderness Road*, which was shown nightly except Sundays at Berea, Kentucky, through July and August

Give them plenty of time to see their friends in similar garb and get the laughs over with before the night of the performance. Remember to hold your costume rehearsals as near the end of the preparation for the pageant as possible so that the Technical Director has had an opportunity to assemble his lighting equipment at the pageant field or at the indoor auditorium. Also he must have established in his mind the complete color chart he is to follow throughout each episode. To get the true effect of artificial lights on the costumes, all this preliminary planning is necessary.

Whether or not you should hold a full rehearsal as you would a dress rehearsal for a play is based on matters of convenience. If it is possible to hold a complete dress rehearsal without having the seats filled with non-paying spectators who will not return the night of the performance and buy a ticket, a full

that he must be on the alert and follow the tempo of each episode, then a full dress rehearsal is not absolutely necessary. Costumes can be kept fresh for the opening night's performance since they have been taken home and pressed after the costume rehearsal.

Unlike pure drama, or even pageant-drama, we are not striving to build toward a dramatic climax; our aim is merely to present the unity of an idea in the historical growth and development of a community through the spectacle known as pageantry.

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# THE MUSICAL PLAY: Part II

By DELWIN B. DUSENBURY

WITH the same pleasant persistence of many of their melodies, the names of Richard Rodgers, the composer, and Oscar Hammerstein II, the poet, have been omnipresent in the history of America's popular musical theater since the Twenties. Rodgers' collaborations with Lorenz Hart\* demonstrated that music could be a positive force in moving the action forward in a musical comedy; that the dance and ballet could be an integral part of the plot; and that believable and intricate plots could replace the stereotyped boy-meets-girl story. While, during the same period, Hammerstein writing the book and lyrics to the melodies of Sigmund Romberg and Jerome Kern labored conscientiously producing a true poetry marked by simplicity, clarity, and a rare understanding of human emotions and beliefs. When these two creative artists of the theater were brought together to work on a musical adaptation of Lynn Riggs' play, *Green Grow the Lilacs*, it was a productive explosion. "What happened between Oscar and me was almost chemical," writes Rodgers; "put the right components together and an explosion takes place." The ultimate result is best described by a critic of their most recent success, *Flower Drum Song*:

Instead of a perfunctory plot, interrupted by musical numbers, it told an interesting story which the songs helped advance. In place of cardboard characters there were real people who burst into song or dance only when they had honest emotions to express. Instead of never-never-land settings, there was a strange but believable background.

But then Rodgers had earlier indicated the desire to develop a musical play "where music has emotion as well as rhythm, where lyrics become poetry, where design has artistry, and where dancing has meaning and is not a succession of hammer blows on a wooden stage." The remarkable success and innovations of their eight productions — *Oklahoma* (1943), *Carousel* (1945), *Allegro* (1947), *South Pacific* (1949), *The King and I* (1951), *Me and Juliet* (1953), *Pipe Dream* (1955), and *Flower Drum Song* (1958) — proves the aptness of the title, "the two old masters — the movers and molders of modern American musical comedy."

No musical production since *Show Boat* so captivated American critics and audiences alike as did *Oklahoma*. Originally titled *Away We Go*, the problems during the rehearsal and try-out period seemed insurmountable. The producers of the Theater Guild, after an unsuccessful season, found it difficult to obtain

money for the production. The cast headed by Alfred Drake, Joan Roberts, Celeste Holm, and Lee Dixon were comparatively unknown. Rouben Mamoulian, the director, had been associated with only one musical production in his career, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, and it had not been a smashing success. Only the composer and the adaptor had faith in the production. As Rodgers wrote:

The very first lyric that Oscar finished was "Oh, What A Beautiful Mornin'" and when he handed it to me and I read it for the first time I was a little sick with joy because it was so lovely and so right. When you're given lines like, "The corn is as high as a elephant's eye," you get something to say musically.

But then, as Hammerstein modestly notes, he was inspired by the stage directions of Lynn Riggs. The final result is best described by Agnes de Mille, whose unique and inspired choreography enhanced the production:

The curtain went up on a woman churning butter; a very fine baritone came on singing the closest thing to "lieder" our theater has produced. He sang exquisitely... At the end, people gave an audible sigh and looked at one another — this had seldom happened before. It was music. They sat right back and opened their hearts.

Here was a new form of musical theater — colorful, rich in native humor and regional flavor, combining music and dramatic theater as well as ballet. During the first forty-five minutes not a chorus girl appeared on the stage. Jud Fry was not the usual villain of musical comedy, and his murder was not the usual ingredient of a musical comedy. Some said *Oklahoma* was "a folk opera," but its creators defined it as "a musical

play," in which according to Deems Taylor, "the treatment of words and music allows them to function almost as leading motives, giving the story extraordinary unity and plausibility."

With only 12 individual musical numbers in *Oklahoma* as compared with 20 in *Show Boat*, there are slightly over twice that number of musical cues. This pattern exemplified a major innovation in the modern musical theater. Even when there is no singing or dancing, a melodious flow of music continues under the pantomime and scene transitions. *South Pacific* brought this pattern to a new high with the music cues (49) tripled as compared with the basic numbers (15).

Furthermore, with *Oklahoma*, Rodgers and Hammerstein originated a formula of collaboration similar to that of Gilbert and Sullivan. Since the American musical theater of the twentieth century had been dominated by foreign importations, writers became accustomed to creating American lyrics to fit an already completed score — a pattern they followed even when American composers began replacing the foreign ones. As Rodgers indicates, "the best way to write music is to weave it into a story rather than try pulling hit tunes out of thin air." As a result, after the authors had decided on the book, Hammerstein would first write the lyrics and then submit them to Rodgers for the music. As a practical man of the theater, Rodgers found composing singable music a simple task while the mild-mannered, methodical Hammerstein sweated over every word. For example, the lyrics of "Happy Talk" were the result of two weeks of writing for Hammerstein, while Rodgers wrote the music in twenty minutes. Regardless of the disparity in creative method between the two men, the final result raised America's popular musical theater to its highest level of achievement.

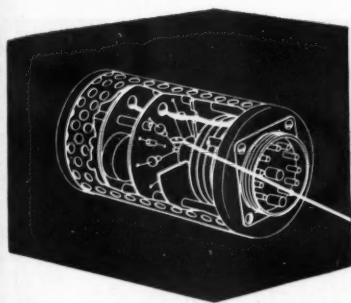
The New York production of *Oklahoma*



The cast of the ballet, "The Small House of Uncle Thomas," one of the highlights of *The King and I*, as presented by Ashland, Ohio, High School under the direction of William Mast

\* "The Boys from Columbia: Rodgers and Hart." *DRAMATICS*, December, 1958.





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*homa* ran five years and nine weeks and still holds the record as the longest-run musical production in the history of the American theater (2248 consecutive performances). While Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth* was awarded the 1943 Pulitzer Drama Prize, *Oklahoma* received a Special Award from the committee in 1944. Furthermore it was the first Broadway musical production to have all of its major musical numbers recorded by the original cast.

After seeing *Oklahoma*, Ferenc Molnar, the Hungarian playwright, finally con-

sented to a Rodgers and Hammerstein musical version of his play, *Liliom*. Some years earlier, the Theater Guild had requested Molnar's permission, but since the play was considered by critics as a modern classic, Molnar was satisfied to leave it that way. The success of *Oklahoma* moved him to change his mind. With the Hungarian scene moved to a New England sea-coast village in the late 1880's, the famed team demonstrated in *Carousel* that any story can be told in American musical form, if it is told right. With Jo Mielziner replacing Lem-

uel Ayers as scene designer, the same production team — Mamoulian, de Mille and Miles White as costumer — responsible for the success of *Oklahoma*, created *Carousel*, with John Raitt, a product of a California opera company, who had sung "Curly" in the National Company of *Oklahoma*, and Jan Clayton, a newcomer from the West Coast, in the leading roles. Essentially a tragic story, Rodgers and Hammerstein brought forth "a lovely, touching musical drama" which provided "an evening of sheer theatrical enchantment."

Since *Oklahoma* and *Carousel* were basically adaptations, Rodgers and Hammerstein made a radical departure from previous works in their next production, *Allegro*, by creating an original musical play depicting the first 35 years in the life of Joseph Taylor, Jr., the son of a small-town physician, who becomes a doctor serving wealthy neurotic patients only to discover that this is not the life he wants. Utilizing the concept of a Greek chorus singing in cantata form about the major events in the hero's life and a stage relatively bare of scenery and properties but including a large screen at the back of the stage on which projections and lighting effects reflected the mood of each scene, *Allegro* proved too costly to be a financial success and closed, after 315 performances on July 10, 1948.

In the same year the Pulitzer Prize for fiction had been awarded to James

(Continued on Page 29)



The delightful "Kansas City," as sung by Will Parker, a character created by Rodgers and Hammerstein in the first adaptation, *Oklahoma*, as produced by the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina under the direction of Herman Middleton



# THEATER



FOR

CHILDREN

FRIEDA E. REED

## CHILDREN LOVE TRICKS By WANDA BACHMAN

FROM the youngest children in our audience came an "Oooh" at the sight of Monstro, the whale in our production of *Pinocchio*. To them he appeared a huge monster threatening Gepetto and his wooden son. To the children somewhat older, the whale did not seem real; they knew he was painted wood, but still for them, there was some magic making his eyes blink and his stomach transparent. The oldest children in the audience saw the painted beaver-board whale raise and lower his long-lashed eyelids; they saw the candle suddenly light in his stomach revealing the unwilling puppet and his father in their prison, but their reaction was How? How did the whale stand up? How do they make his stomach light up? What makes his eyes wink?

When the energetic audience swarmed backstage after the play, the littlest ones headed straight to Pinocchio to touch his wondrous nose, or to the kind Blue Fairy to see her wondrous wand. To these children, the wooden frames, painted muslin, and strange objects on stage had no connection with the dark forests or strange monster in the story. The older children examined the back of the set, wanting to pull the rope which ran through a pulley to control the winking eyes of the whale, trying to poke fingers through the scrim covering the opening of the stomach, trying the doors and windows of the set. The oldest children were able to understand how the whale was operated on stage, but it was only our stage crew who really understood all the work required to set up Monstro.

There were three parts to our whale: his sixteen-foot long black beaverboard front, his pink muslin and wood-flat backing, and the equally pink "roof" of his stomach and mouth. The setting up of these pieces and a wave ground row, and the installing of lights within the stomach took a longer time than was allowed by the short transition scene before the curtain, during which we were supposed to shift. We solved this problem by using a muslin drop as background for the scene in Booby Land before the whale episode and shifting during that scene. It was during this scene that Pinocchio's metamorphosis occurred, changing him from naughty puppet to braying donkey.

Bright colors and large shapes made



*Pinocchio*, Troupe 1000, Upper Darby, Pa., High School, Frieda E. Reed, Maizie Weil, Co-Sponsors

this Booby Land scene particularly attractive for the younger children. Gigantic ice cream cone, candy cane, lollipops, a bright carousel, and roller coaster were colored with paints mixed with glycerin to prevent cracking when the drop was rolled. A single prop, a fanciful fun-house mirror molded of celastic, provided a place for Pinocchio to discover the reflection of his long donkey ears.

Besides the whale, the other important story-book creature in *Pinocchio* is of course Jiminy Cricket, Pinocchio's conscience. The lines for our Cricket were spoken by off stage voices, and our Cricket was a marionette made of paper mache, wearing trousers, "tails," and top hat. He was operated from the catwalk by means of three nylon cords attached to his head and back. In the first rehearsal, we found that he twisted dizzily whenever he had to descend suddenly from the sky. It was necessary to provide a flat surface as a brace for each scene in which Jiminy descended.

The first scene of *Pinocchio* takes place in Gepetto's cottage. The walls of this simple box set were a cheerful yellow with blue trim in bracket shaped curves around the door and latticed window, in the back flat. Gepetto's few pieces of furniture, his table, bench, and bed, were all blue with yellow designs. Shelves on each side flat held decorative bowls, and in one case, provided the needed resting place for the Cricket, whose lines in this scene, ran over the top of the flat and were operated from behind the set. At the point when Pinocchio struck his "conscience," the lines were released, dropping the "dead" cricket to the floor. The abashed puppet threw the poor oversized insect out the window, where he was caught by a waiting crew member, who reeled in his invisible nylon lines and untangled them in preparation for the next scene.

In the second scene *Pinocchio* has run off with Black Cat and Red Fox, and finds himself in the forest. Three beaver-board trees and two muslin covered wood-and-chickenwire bushes composed this forest, and green light on the scrim added to the effect of heavy growth. The Cricket suspended from the branch of a downstage tree gave Pinocchio unheeded warnings, and the puppet went on farther with his sly companions.

In Scene Three, the wily Fox and Cat disguised as assassins, hanged the puppet from a tree beside the home of the kind Blue Fairy. In this set, we used a tree from the preceding scene constructed with a specially prominent branch on which hung a rope conveniently tied with a slip knot. A large rock constructed like the bushes, of chicken wire, wood, and muslin, concealed a stool on which Pinocchio balanced "precariously" while supposedly swinging from the noose. On stage left stood the Blue Fairy's house, a small rigid roofed "half house" painted and trimmed appropriately in two shades of blue. As the Blue Fairy rescued the puppet, the Cricket was lowered from the catwalk, steadied by the tree in front of which he descended. Again Pinocchio disregarded his warnings and went off to the Field of Miracles with his unsavory companions.

The Field of Miracles in the fourth scene was easily represented by a tree from the original forest scene at one side of the stage, and the rock from the previous scene at the other side. Pinocchio, after burying his gold pieces behind the rock (complying with the directions of Fox and Cat), hid his eyes and counted to one thousand. The little wooden head's counting was fine from one to ten, but then it degenerated: "fourteen . . . thirty-one . . . two hundred . . . two dozen eighty-six . . . nine-nine-nine-nine-nine . . . one thousand!" When Pinocchio opened his eyes to find no

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money tree grown, he wondered aloud if he could have counted wrong. It was wonderful to hear the young audience answer loudly, "Yes!" Again, in this scene, Pinocchio's cricket conscience descended from the heavens to a convenient tree branch to admonish the naughty puppet, but again he was ignored.

Pinocchio soon was rescued again by the kind Blue Fairy, who took him into her home and sent him to school. Scene Five is back at the Blue Fairy's home,

formerly the scene Pinocchio's cruel hanging, but now a bright and cheerful home. From the happy scene the little puppet soon was led astray to the land of Boobies, Scene Six, the land of fun for naughty boys. From there Pinocchio escaped into the great whale and then back to Gepetto's humble home, where the Blue Fairy at last made him a real boy.

Designing the sets for Pinocchio involved a few devices peculiar to this play, such as the creation of "cricket

resting spots," but other effects such as variety in scenery, use of large uncomplicated pieces, and brightly colored sets, are suited for all productions for children. The active imaginations of young audiences make the designing of sets for them challenging fun and rewarding effort.

After the sets for the production have been designed and constructed, the problems of sound and lighting effects must be met. The many sounds necessary for the background of *Pinocchio* are ones commonly heard; yet some ingenuity was necessary to find sources of these sounds which we were able to record. The first sounds of harp glides during the Blue Fairy's waving of her wand, and parade music, signifying the approach of the puppet show, were easily found in our record collection. The rattling of the approaching carriage, and the hoof beats we had on a record of a previous production. We hadn't thought that bird calls would be difficult to find to record, but it was only after searching through everyone's record collections that we finally found Morton Gould's "Jungle Drums" on which was a tune with wonderful trills and chirpings. The next sound problem was that of a magic carriage drawn by three black rabbits who came to take Pinocchio to the underworld. This was supposed to be an ominous rumbling. In an afternoon spent listening to records, we could find no

(Continued on Page 28)



The Whale scene from Troupe 1000's *Pinocchio*





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Beaverton, Oregon, Union High School,  
Wes Tolliver, Sponsor

### AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS

Beaverton, Ore., Union High School

FOR years I have wanted to direct a play combining the talents of students and faculty. Knowing our faculty and student body will be divided into two separate schools next year, I felt that this was the year to accomplish my dream.

*Around the World in Eight Days* was selected, and it is the unanimous opinion of everyone involved that we could not have made a better selection. The characters are wonderful, and our cast of 113 was as enchanted with the play the last night of performance as they were at the first reading of the script.

Students played the "leads," and our faculty members were the "cameo" stars. Realizing how busy teachers always are, I cast them as extras and in roles requiring very little group rehearsing. When an emergency arose, keeping the teacher from rehearsal, student extras were always willing to "stand-in." It was truly a thrilling experience to watch student and teacher working together during the rehearsal period. A relationship grew out of this experience which will long be remembered.

Rodney Dawes' play is certainly one of the most flexible with which I have worked. The script does not call for any elaborate setting, but it does offer many possibilities in staging. We added a tableau showing the balloon ascension, a visible processional with Hindu dancers in the jungle scene, and in the Lombard street scene we used a group of faculty members as a charity band. Our stagecraft class spent many a happy hour painting drops; however, we staged many scenes in front of the oleo curtain with only a few suggestive props.

Even though our production was an all-out effort with elaborate sets, costumes, sound, and lighting effects, I can

see great possibilities for the school with limited facilities. *Around the World in Eighty Days* is exciting to do, fun to watch, and yet it has something to say in this day when distance is shrinking faster than even Jules Vern could have imagined.

WES TOLLIVER

Sponsor, Troupe 1634

### MACBETH

Cardozo High School, Washington, D.C.

A WAVE of excitement came over me when the play selection committee of Troupe 1367 announced that *Macbeth* was their first choice for our Spring play.

Since that day (January 7, 1958), however, I regretted many times that we had accepted the decision of the committee so gleefully. For the road to a finished production was a rough and thorny one. Reading rehearsals were a

## PLAYS OF THE MONTH

Edited By EARL BLANK

nightmare. How to coach a reluctant sophomore to be the aged King Duncan of a thousand years ago? Getting the costumes made was another chore. But our herculean effort came in set-building. We discovered in February that our old sets were shot to pieces, so we had to start from scratch. My heart went down to my boots at the thought of all that nail-pounding and glue-cooking in addition to rehearsals.

Everyone in the school cooperated beautifully, however. The Art Club set aside a whole room and worked frenziedly, building the set, making set pieces, and painting — painting — painting! The Stage-Crafters stuck with us through many a weary after-school rehearsal, setting the stage, fiddling with the lights, and working out a sound plot. Finally, the Home Economics Department produced a most attractive set of costumes.

The result of this combined effort was a handsomely mounted set, a smooth, professional-acting cast, dressed to produce a symphony of color and to give an impression of regal splendor. All of this served to make *Macbeth* the Troupe's most satisfying production to date.

Finally, the fact that we played to a full auditorium both nights enhanced the feeling we had that all of our labor had not been in vain. Not only had we gained a deeper knowledge of and appreciation for this great classic, but we had produced splendid entertainment for Cardozo pupils and their friends.

MAXINE E. DALY

Sponsor, Troupe 1367



**Macbeth**, Troupe 1367, Cardozo High School, Washington, D. C.,  
Maxine E. Daly, Sponsor

MACBETH  
ONIONS IN THE STEW  
DR. HUDSON'S SECRET JOURNAL  
AROUND THE WORLD IN  
EIGHTY DAYS

DR. HUDSON'S SECRET JOURNAL

Tarentum, Pa., High School

**D**R. Hudson's *Secret Journal* is a rewarding and uplifting work with great possibilities for character study and development. Our audience felt that the secret pages of Dr. Hudson's journal really came to life on our stage as the cast very skillfully "lived" the lives of the patients, doctors, nurses, and visitors that entered this dedicated man's office.

Not very much action is indicated in this play. To give the opportunity for as much movement as possible to relieve the static quality of the play the staging must be carefully planned to "spark" and to hold the interest of the audience and yet retain the dignity of the doctor's office.

We used canvas settings painted Wedgewood blue with white woodwork. The furniture was modern gray metal with upholstered, leather seats and backs. The drapes, planters, Venetian blinds and doors, medical screens, and other appropriate accessories added the touch of color to keep the set interesting from all sight lines. A study of medical center architectural trends and medical supply catalogues will provide much material for the set designer and the prop chairman.

A visit to an "out patient clinic" will greatly aid the director and the players in establishing the mood of the play completing character studies.

The mounting tension and the excitement with all the warm understanding

of people inherent in the writing of Lloyd C. Douglas combine to make this play an unforgettable experience and an excellent "season opener."

HOWARD E. WATTERSON  
Sponsor, Troupe 193

ONIONS IN THE STEW

Broken Arrow, Okla., High School

**I**F you like tangy comedy with action, music, and student appeal, you can't go wrong with *Onions in the Stew*. It is more than good theater; it is a way of life.

What are the ingredients of this stew? The recipe might be something like this: take one simple interior, one unique setting, one moving day, one happy family with two teenage daughters, one thousand problems, dozens of house guests who come and go at all hours; to this composite add one snowstorm, a handful of yellowjackets (in the living room), spice with firelight, orchids and music to fit each mood. Mix thoroughly and then add the spice of one guest who sits on

the roof in order to get a better view while he studies sea life, one boat load of handsome sailors, and you have a small glimpse of the comedy parts. When the note of problem solving and understanding is added, you have *Onions in the Stew*.

The built-in radio program has unlimited possibilities. We used musicians seated in the loft area. They furnished soft background music which seemed to come from the radio. With very little effort a television show could be used instead of radio.

There is a picture window which adds a useful note by supplying the symbols of the seasons. It is a colorful day in autumn when the Macdonalds move to Vashon Island. The accent of the season may be leaves floating by the window or a limb near the window with red and yellow leaves. Then comes the snowstorm, echoed again by the window; and finally summer when the flowers are blooming everywhere. Betty Macdonald is painting a small table (green) when the warm season appears—for this we used "Green Door." It was very effective.

Watch for the parade of plumbers because they are different. We may say, "plumbers, plumbers everywhere and every pipe did leak."

The effortless humor moves through family problems including uninvited guests, lovers all over the place and a bed in every corner on to the final scene where the place is suddenly swarming with sailors and the curtain closes with "Anchors Away."

The human touch of a growing family growing into a beautiful unity of thought and action gives *Onions in the Stew* a particular glow, seldom found in comedy. This is truly a keepsake play which may well be called a comedy with dramatic accent.

MARIE HICKS  
Sponsor, Troupe 422



*Onions in the Stew*, Troupe 422, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, High School, Marie Hicks, Sponsor



*Dr. Hudson's Secret Journal*, Troupe 193, Tarentum, Pa., High School, Howard E. Watterson, Sponsor

PUBLISHERS

*Onions in the Stew*, *Dr. Hudson's Secret Journal*, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, Dramatic Publishing Company, Chicago, Illinois.



# Thespian Chatter

## ANDERSON, INDIANA

### Troupe 736

"The Play Must Go On" is an old quote with a new meaning for Thespian Troupe 736. Six hours before curtain time on Friday evening, November 7, fire completely destroyed our gym which was located a few yards from the main building. School was hurriedly dismissed, the building was finally aired out, the cast was assembled, and the curtain rose on time for *Cheaper by the Dozen*. Although both the audience and the cast had wobbly nerves, all efforts seemed worthwhile.

With part of our financial gains, our troupe chartered a bus in early December and went to Indianapolis in sub-zero weather to see *Sunrise at Campobello*. It was the first contact with legitimate theater for several of our group.

Our troupe was represented in the annual Christmas convocation; some members are now rehearsing for the school's annual talent show, and some Thespians will appear in the senior class play in April. January 26 is the date for our mid-year initiation and dinner meeting.

Troupe 736 will observe its tenth birthday the latter part of March at which time we hope to have an open meeting featuring two one-act plays as well as a birthday cake and candles. — *Harry E. McGoon, Sponsor*



Denny May and Judy Hereau as Mr. and Mrs. Cavanaugh in *Young Adventure*, Troupe 215, Stambaugh, Mich., High School, Helen Dunham, Sponsor

## WEATHERFORD, TEXAS

### Troupe 1607

Just 420 students make up the enrollment at Weatherford High School, and 86 of these students are active paid members of the Foot-light Club. Because of these facts we wondered whether being members of the National Thespian Society would or could draw any more interest toward drama in our school. Our question was answered. We became a new troupe (1607) in this vast organization this year. Starting out with just the minimum of eight charter members, only a month after organizing we initiated nine more members; and at our Spring Initiation this year we will have probably 20 more members. Enthusiasm has mounted and is still increasing. Students beg for jobs and drama opportunities to gain points.

In our fall production, *Dark Victory*, which we ran three nights, we sold 1600 tickets and made \$800 profit, which will be spent for equipment for our stage and department. The National Thespians were the instigating group in all this work. — *Betty Witherspoon, Secretary*

## ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

### Troupe 837

Things are just settling down after our presentation of *Meet Me in St. Louis* on November 11-14. This, our second production as members of National Thespians, was a huge success, at least in terms of the laughter of both the cast and the audience.

Authentic costumes and an artistic set certainly created an early 1900's affect, and long hours of rehearsal time paid dividends. Of course "Grandpa Prophater" is glad to have his natural hair color again and to be rid of a spirit gum and cotton beard. Poor "Esther" is quite happy to have swallowed her last whole chicken heart, and we're all quite relieved that our experience using a live Siamese cat caused nothing worse than minor scratches.

All considered, though, a great time was had by everyone, as evidenced by the enthusiastic plans for our next play. — *Betsy Kraus, Scribe*

## ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS

### Troupe 1819

Ever since West High School first adopted "the all-school play" system, the idea has been well-received. This idea was initiated in 1957 with our first production, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, which was uproariously successful. The cast called for 35 people, which gave many students a chance to participate.

Our main objective in doing all-school plays is to give lower-classmen a chance to perform in their first year of high school. Their parts are usually small, but it is a good step for future dramatic training. By the time they are seniors, they know pretty much what to do on stage and can do it better than those who have had no experience. Then they are ready to take on leading roles. Having been extremely



Philip Cope as Sheridan Whiteside, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, Troupe 1327, Wichita, Kansas, High School West, Rawley T. Farnsworth, Sponsor

successful in our school, all-school plays are strongly recommended to other schools.

Our other productions included *Our Town*, *The Great Sebastians*, and *Arsenic and Old Lace*, which was a tremendous success. Our operettas included *The Mikado*, *Wonderful Town*, and *The Wizard of Oz*, for which a special matinee performance was given for small children.

Our Thespian initiation ceremony was held last May, 1958. Invitations to students, parents, and faculty members were issued, and a fine program was presented. The first half of the program consisted of students presenting excerpts from plays. Some scenes included were *Streetcar Named Desire*, *St. Joan*, *Anastasia*, *Gigi*, and *Craig's Wife*. The second half was the actual initiation ceremony itself, after which refreshments were served.

## 1959 — REGIONAL CONFERENCES — 1960

- |                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IDAHO .....                 | Senior High School, Idaho Falls, Idaho, Glen Foster, Sponsor, Troupe 480, May 2.                                                                                                                                                 |
| MINNESOTA .....             | Memorial High School, Ely, Minnesota, Elizabeth Gjervik, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 576, May 9.                                                                                                                       |
| NEW YORK<br>(Western) ..... | Drama Festival, State University of N.Y. Agricultural and Tech. Institute, Alfred, New York, Mort Clark, Program Chairman; Robert Timerson, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1286, Trumansburg High School, April 29-May 3. |
| NEW YORK<br>(Eastern) ..... | Great Neck South High School, Great Neck, New York, Bernard Boerssoff, Program Chairman; Charles L. Jones, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 861, Port Jefferson, New York, High School, May 16.                             |
| OHIO<br>(Northwest) .....   | Bryan High School, Mabel Robrock, Sponsor, Troupe 227, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, October 17.                                                     |
| OHIO<br>(Northeast) .....   | Washington High School, Massillon, Ohio, Robert C. Pfendler, Sponsor, Troupe 178, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, November 6.                          |
| OREGON .....                | University of Portland, Melba Day Sparks, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 124, Jefferson High School, Portland, March, 1960.                                                                                               |
| WASHINGTON .....            | Wenatchee, Wash., High School, Lillian Grece Brown, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 469, April 18.                                                                                                                         |



# THE AMERICAN SPIRIT

A Patriotic Play by

MICHAEL A. HENNESSY

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Here is an impelling, dramatic theme, centered around Bill Jones, a Boy Scout bugler, which has a three-fold purpose: it is a plea for peace; it is a memorial to those who have died for their country; it is an educational review of highlights in our nation's history, introducing such characters as Francis Scott Key, Abraham Lincoln, General Lee, General Grant, and a representative of each war up through the Korean War. As each of the scenes re-lives before Bill's eyes we sense the dedication of these men to their country in spite of the futility of war as it has continued on through each generation. NOW is the time for world re-education—for finding the true meaning of world harmony and for the nations of the world to make their decision as to their destiny—world prosperity or world destruction.

BAKER'S



PLAYS

100 SUMMER ST.

BOSTON 10, MASS.

On Dec. 6th seven charter members attended the Northern Illinois Regional Thespian Conference in Wheaton, Ill., with several of our members performing. — *John Stannard, Scribe*

## KENOVA, W. VA.

### Troupe 115

Thespian Troupe 115 of Ceredo-Kenova High School has participated in and has planned many various activities for the 1958-59 school term. Among these activities are presenting a Veterans Day Program for the high school and also for the public; participating in several P.T.A. meetings of the school; presenting two Christmas Programs for the student body; having a Christmas Dance; attending the W. Va. State High School Drama Festival to be held in March at Marshall College, Huntington, W. Va.; and later the Festival will be held at W. Va. University, in Morgantown, W. Va.; presenting the "Thespian Follies" which will feature the talent of members of the Troupe; and we are also planning to participate in an Oratorical Contest, which is sponsored by the American Legion.

In recent club meetings the members have had charge of the programs. At one meeting Jeannine Hatten and Jane Hamer, two of the members who attended the National Thespian Conference at Lafayette last June, gave a demonstration on The Art of Make-Up.

At the first meeting in September, officers for the year were chosen, and special committees of the Troupe were designated. The committees are as follow: Talent, Social, Publicity, Program, and The Ways and Means Committee. Special committees are also appointed for the various plays and programs put on by the Troupe.

The Troupe is also planning to present several additional Thespian Plays. The sponsor of this very active Thespian Society group from Ceredo-Kenova High School is Mrs. C. W. Bartram. — *Linda Lou Thompson, Scribe*

## WILLAMINA, ORE.

### Troupe 970

Thespian Troupe 970 noticed that in your recent publication, *Blithe Spirit* was named one of the plays of the month. This is especially

interesting to us since our Thespian Troupe recently presented this play. We found the presentation of this play most rewarding, and everyone involved in its production had a most enjoyable time.

The problems involved in the production of this play were about the same as those by other schools presenting this show. Problems, such as the set being torn apart around Charles in the last scene and the unusual lighting during the seances, were soon solved.

We felt that even though this is technically a difficult play in many respects, that it was well worth the additional expenditure of time

## COMING YOUR WAY

LAST TRAIN FROM GUN HILL, western, Kirk Douglas, Carolyn Jones. (PAR)

THUNDER IN THE SUN, outdoor drama, Susan Hayward, Jeff Chandler. (PAR)

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, drama, Millie Perkins, Joseph Schildkraut. (20TH-FOX)

SHADOW OF A GUN MAN, western, Charles Bronson, John Carradine. (20TH-FOX)

THE BAT MASTERSON STORY, western, Joel McCrea, Nancy Gates. (UA)

WESTBOUND, outdoor drama, Randolph Scott, Virginia Mayo. (WAR)

THE LAST ANGRY MAN, drama, Paul Muni, David Wayne. (COL)

GREEN MANSIONS, drama, Audrey Hepburn, Anthony Perkins. (MGM)

THE FIVE PENNIES, drama, Danny Kaye, Louis Armstrong. (PAR)

THE MOUSE THAT ROARED, comedy, Jean Seberg, Peter Sellers. (COL)

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS, drama, Deborah Kerr, Rossano Brazzi. (MGM)

THE SCAPEGOAT, drama, Alex Guinness, Bette Davis. (MGM)

PORK CHOP HILL, drama, Gregory Peck, Rip Torn. (UA)

THE HORSE'S MOUTH, comedy, Alec Guinness, Kay Walsh. (UA)

THE FBI STORY, drama, James Stewart, Vera Miles. (WAR)

and effort required to produce it. The major roles are heavy ones, and require true finesse in timing, speed and clarity of diction, and excellence of pantomimic techniques. Our director felt that from a standpoint of the training of student actors and of the pure enjoyment of cast and crew in participating in a show this was one of the most successful productions we have ever had. — *Charlene Kauble, Reporter*

## BONNER SPRINGS, KANS.

### Troupe 1353

Although we have just recently re-organized our club, the Bonner Springs Thespian Troupe 1353 has taken an active part in the school activities. Last year we very successfully presented the junior class play, *The Curious Savage* and the one-act play, *Love Errant*.

This year we have been busier than ever. Our first presentation was the senior class play in the fall. *The Family Nobody Wanted* proved to be very much wanted and the play was said to be one of the best produced in Bonner Springs.

At the present we are working on contest selections and the one-act play, *Antic Spring*. Future projects include an assembly for the student body and a Thespian sponsored all-school play. We are very grateful to our sponsor, Dale Veach, for helping our troupe to get on its feet so well, and for giving us so much of his time. — *Linda Krueger, Secretary*

## AMSTERDAM, N. Y.

### Troupe 1668

Thespian Troupe 1668 was installed on January 8 at an informal ceremony in the Wilbur Lynch Auditorium. The troupe presently consists of nine charter members, but we are planning to have ten more members in the spring. At that time we will hold a formal initiation ceremony with the girls wearing gowns and the boys wearing suits.

The new Thespians were major contributors to the success of *Mrs. McThing*, the first drama club presentation of the year. (Incidentally, this is also the first year of our drama club). Although some of the cast and crew had worked in the recreation department's annual summer musical production or summer stock, for the



Drums of Oude, Troupe 394, Buhl, Idaho, High School, Helen Brinkman, Sponsor

most part we were amateur amateurs. It was quite hard getting use to the fast pace of theater work, but everyone responded, working wholeheartedly. As a result our audience truly appreciated this comedy. Among other productions being planned are Junior Prize Speaking, in which eight juniors give a ten-minute speech with two prizes given—one to the best boy speaker and one to the girl; Scampers, the annual musical variety show sponsored by the cheerleaders; another drama club play; and finally the senior class play. It's quite a busy schedule, but the students and faculty are very co-operative, and we feel our chances for success are quite high. —Margaret Lazarou, Secretary

#### SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

#### Troupe 1322

Although this is the first year that the C. K. McClatchy High School has had a Thespian Troupe, the dramatics program has been quite active.

In early December members of the senior class, including four charter Thespians, presented *The White Sheep of the Family*, a three-act comedy, which drew a very successful response both audience and review-wise. Closely following that was a classroom production of Tennessee Williams' *Something Unspoken*, directed by one of the Troupe's charter members.

Plans for 1959 include a possible world premiere of William Saroyan's *The Accident* and a contest production of *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson to be presented in April at Sacramento State College.

Also many of our charter members have been active in dramatics in connection with the Sacramento Civic Theater and Jay-Rob Productions. One member played a minor role in *The Matchmaker*, directed by Oliver Cliff. It opened the Fall Civic Theater season in Sacramento. At present a charter member is active in the production of *Jack and the Beanstalk* for Sacramento Civic Children's Theater. Our troupe sponsor and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. W. Sibley, are presently playing the two roles in *The Fourposter* for Jay-Rob Productions. As you can see, we are quite active and proud of our new Thespian membership. —Jackie Conner, Secretary

#### INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

#### Troupe 1240

We think Schorling Schneider, who played Justice Credulous in Tech's play at the National Thespian Convention at Purdue University has surely broken some kind of record. When he was a freshman, he won a Best Actor Award at a state one-act play contest. For three years he has been voted Best Thespian by his classmates. Last year he won a First for Humorous Declamation at the Indiana State Forensic Meet. He has played roles with all the city adult drama groups. Best of all, he plays short parts with as much enthusiasm as he plays leads, and that is why he so richly deserves the title of Best Thespian. —Lyle Brewer, Scribe

## TROUPE 1075's TENTH ANNIVERSARY

By MARTHA HOWARD JONES, SPONSOR

TEN years of struggle, heart-break and happiness, ten years of success and failure! A description of life itself? No, that's ten long, short years of Thespian sponsorship. Sikeston High School's drama department had its first curtain call in February, 1949, with a simple teen-age comedy, *Elmer, the Youngest*. That spring we organized Thespian Troupe 1075 with twenty-one charter members.

With Thespian rating came inspiration to try an increasingly ambitious program. Up the scale we have gone from *Cheaper by the Dozen*, *Belles on Their Toes*, *State Fair*, *Father of the Bride*, *My Three Angels*, *Smilin' Through*, *Girl*

the strain of an opening night, suffered a nervous breakdown; one of the "Angels" of *My Three Angels*, who lost his trousers on stage, in full view of the audience; and the night my stage crew, searching for a taste of Broadway by stage-crewing a professional company in the *Four Poster*, embarrassed themselves by splitting the curtain in half in their haste to ring down the first act.

Cherished memories of precious moments dwell lovingly on the pretty little bride in *Father of the Bride*; the many perfectly timed, beautifully executed, pieces of work done by the boy who played Father, who later on won an excellent actor award in the state, and who graduated from Harvard Magna Cum Laude; the steadfastness of the boy who won my first excellent actor award in the state when he snatched our contest play out of the fire, so to speak, after our star became too excited to render his usual outstanding performance; the near professional performance of two fine actors who won excellent actor awards in state competition for two years, one of whom won the first university scholarship given to the best actor in the state; the breathtaking performance of my Emily in *Our Town*, the best high school actress I've ever directed, designed the sets and executed by a girl who now studies architecture at Tulane University; the executive ability and dependability of the girl who was the finest student manager I've ever worked with and without whom such successes as *State Fair* and *Smilin' Through* would have been impossible; the boy whose work started a string of drama trained employees to work at our local radio station, and who for one year master-minded a weekly radio broadcast for us; the enthusiasm of the lovely heroine in *Elmer, the Youngest*; the tears-in-the-throat perfection of the death scene in *Smilin' Through*; and the seven trips made to the state drama festival in these ten years.

Festival plays were such fine work as *The Valiant*, *Where the Cross Is Made*, *Highness*, *Allison's Lad*, *Andante*, and the third act of *All My Sons*. Fortune and talented students have smiled on us, giving us excellent or superior ratings each year. Also, seven of my boys have had excellent actor awards in state competition.

Students have developed poise, personality, voice, muscular coordination, and a sense of responsibility. They have grown in maturity. They have learned to work with others. They have developed some artistic sense, and an appreciation of drama as literature.

Has it been worth the gray hairs and crows' feet, the jangled nerves? "There's no business like show business."



Sikeston, Mo., High School Thespians practicing for a production of *Our Town*, Troupe 1075, Martha Jones, Sponsor

*Crazy*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *All My Sons*, and *Our Town*.

Memories that bring both a smile and a tear include the little "five dollar dog" in *Cheaper by the Dozen*, who, not able to bear

## CHILDREN'S THEATER

(Continued from Page 23)

ominous rumblings until someone was inspired to play the kettle drum theme of the hunters in "Peter and the Wolf" at 33½ RPM rather than the 78 speed for which it was intended. This produced a very vibrant rumble. Background noises for the whale were continuous bubblings, supplied by two people blowing through straws into glasses of water, and the loud snoring of the whale was provided by a willing crew member with strong adenoids.

Lighting for this production provided few problems. X-rays, hidden by a ground row representing grass, lighted the scrim in each scene, green for forest effect, and blue for open sky. Lighting

inside the whale's stomach proved the main difficulty. Our student head of lighting solved the problem by using a short strip of backing lights within the whale's stomach, which illuminated the whole interior when Gepetto lighted his candle (a small pencil flashlight).

Many weeks of sketching, measuring, and ruling went into the designing of the six sets for *Pinocchio*; six weeks of construction and rehearsal went into the creation of a smoothly moving production. The three hours of our three performances seemed little time in comparison, but the "Ooohs" from the audience, and the comments from youthful visitors backstage were more than satisfying rewards. As one little visitor cried, "Oh look—it's real!"



## MUSICAL PLAY

(Continued from Page 21)

Michener for his collection of short stories based on his experiences during World War II. The stories, published as *Tales of the South Pacific*, were brought to the attention of the director and co-author of *Mister Roberts*, Joshua Logan, who listed among his directing credits such fine musical productions as *I Married an Angel*, *By Jupiter*, and *Annie Get Your Gun*. With the assistance of Leland Hayward, an actor's agent turned producer, Logan persuaded Rodgers and Hammerstein to obtain the dramatic rights, and the wheels were set in motion for the musical play which ranks second only to *Oklahoma* as the most successful production in musical theater history (1925 consecutive performances). With Logan as director, *South Pacific* won every award possible for a musical production including the coveted Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1950.

Selecting the stories, "Fo Dolla," dealing with the romance of Liat, the native girl, and Lieutenant Joseph Cable, and "Our Heroine," which told of the Navy nurse, Nellie Forbush, and the French ex-patriate planter, the middle-aged Emile de Becque, Rodgers and Hammerstein were fortunate in obtaining the services of Ezio Pinza and Mary Martin before the book was completed. Pinza, after an illustrious career of twenty years in grand opera, wanted to appear in a Broadway production, and Mary Martin had completed a successful tour in the National Company of *Annie Get Your Gun*. In developing the music, the personality of the singing actors as well as the basic characteristics of Michener's creations determined the type of song written for them. Since de Becque was essentially a romantic character, his songs were decidedly romantic ("Some Enchanted Evening"), while Nellie Forbush was a down-to-earth individual who could sing "A Cockeyed Optimist." Lieutenant Cable as a serious-minded young man was given the very serious "You've Got To Be Taught," and the music depicting the Polynesian nature and atmosphere was written for "Bloody Mary" and superbly sung by Juanita Hall.

Then too the authors and directors realized that if they used "groups" of singers and dancers to develop each song—the customary practise—the effect would seem artificial in a story as real and serious as *South Pacific*. Therefore all of the members of the cast were selected and directed as individuals rather than as members of the chorus. In order to maintain the dramatic impact of the total production, each scene dissolved into the next scene similar to the lap-dissolve technique of motion pictures and television. As a result, George Jean Nathan noted that *South Pacific* was "an infinitely more intelligent musical than most" and the consensus of the critics was that it was "a magnificent musical drama."

## TRAIN!

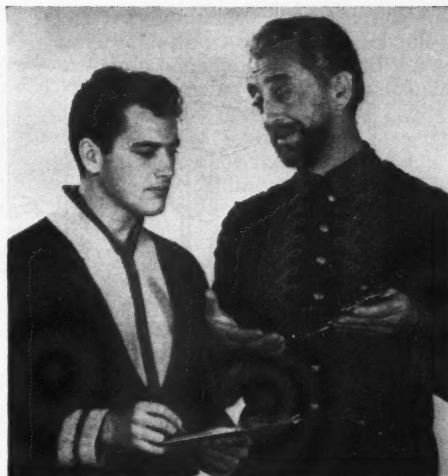
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Stage manager in charge of the recent Playhouse production, "The Waltz of the Toreadors," was Carl Monson, advanced College of Theatre Arts student. He is shown here with Broadway star John Abbott. Directing majors who are sufficiently competent to win the coveted position of stage manager for main-stage—from whom a seasoned cast and crew must take orders—generally go on to become outstanding directors in the profession.

Three advanced student actors were on stage; behind the scenes of the show were sound technicians, set designers and lighting artists—students enrolled specifically to learn the technical aspects of show business.

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Approximately the same phrases were used to describe *The King and I* based on the true story, as told by Margaret Landon, of Anna Leonowens who became the tutor of the 67 children of the King of Siam. With magnificent settings by Jo Mielziner, the radiant personality of Gertrude Lawrence, and the snarling but likeable impersonation of the King by the comparatively unknown Yul Brynner, *The King and I* was a musical play with no hero or heroine and not even a kiss. Still, every song advanced the plot, and the audience saw the characters as real people with real problems who could sing about them without destroying the believability of the plot.

As two men with three decades of rich theatrical tradition behind them and with their own theatrical producing firm, organized in 1944, the selection of the theater itself as the theme of their next production seemed inevitable. The plot of *Me and Juliet* deals with "the little people" of the theater—the assistant stage manager, a singer in the chorus, an electrician, and their plot moved all over the theater—back stage, the lobby, the offices, and even the light bridge. With an excellent cast featuring Isabel Bigley, Bill Hayes, Ray Walston, Joan McCracken, and Mark Dawson, under the direction of the veteran director, playwright, and actor, George Abbott, *Me and Juliet* was a lively and yet affectionate survey of footlight life, Rodgers and Hammerstein's "love letter to the theater."

The sincerity which marked the success of *Me and Juliet* was the major ingredient lacking in their next production, *Pipe Dream*, adapted from John Steinbeck's novel, *Sweet Thursday*. Dealing with a heterogeneous group of social outcasts from "Cannery Row" near Monterey, California, *Pipe Dream* had the shortest run of any Rodgers and Hammerstein production and was their most costly failure.

Their latest production, *Flower Drum Song*, based on C. Y. Lee's novel, deals with the problems facing the older and younger generations in San Francisco's Chinatown. As played by Miyoshi Umeki, Pat Suzuki, Larry Blyden, Jaunita Hall and others, *Flower Drum Song* is delightfully sung and acted, excitingly danced, and evinces a warm-hearted sincerity.

The casts of the Rodgers and Hammerstein "Theater" whether on Broadway or in the numerous touring companies, here and abroad, reads like a "Who's Who" of the modern musical theater. Furthermore, it has provided an excellent showcase to display the talents of individuals in other departments of the theater, such as the choreography of Robert Alton, Jerome Robbins, and Carol Haney; the directing of Harold Clurman, John van Druten and Gene Kelly; and the costuming of Irene Sharaff, Motley, Lucinda Ballard and Alvin Colt; and the orchestrations of Robert Russell Bennett.



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### WHAT DO YOU SAY?

(Continued from Page 11)

opening our minds to each other. As mind-reading is a lost art, nothing useful happens unless we participate. We should not let discussion run long before putting in our own oar. Unless we are asleep, we presumably have some reaction to the point that has just been made. We do not understand it, we think it irrelevant, we agree with it, we disagree with it, we have an argument that backs it up or refutes it, we have an illustration for it. Then let us say so.

*Don't interrupt!* In our impatience to speak, however, we should not often interrupt others. Occasional interruptions enliven the conversation, but some persons interrupt constantly. If the other person stops talking, he feels annoyed; if he doesn't stop, two are talking at the same time, and little good comes of this. If we have too low an emotional boiling point in conversation, we should cultivate self-control. A remark worth making will keep for a few seconds.

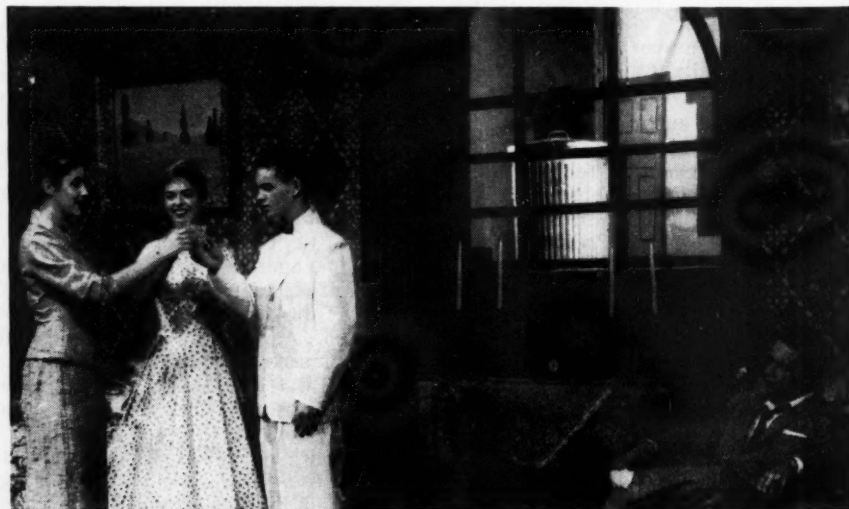
*Be Brief!* Usually we should not attempt to make more than one point in each contribution and should express the point as tersely as possible. Many words cloud the argument, and those who insist on making speeches are usually bores.

*Follow the ball!* We should listen carefully to what others are saying, take the trouble to understand them, and when we reply should usually react to

the point that has been made. Those so full of themselves and their own ideas that they constantly shoot off into space and go into orbit are a nuisance.

*Speak carefully!* While spontaneity is the life of conversation, we need not mumble our words, ignore the rules of grammar, or use words carelessly. Slovenly speech in conversation is like dungarees and sweat shirt at a party; it shows little respect for others and interferes with the business in hand.

We cannot in every conversation be thinking about how to talk well, but we can profitably think about it a good deal more than we do. We improve by doing and by thinking about what we do, and opportunities to practice are many. As educated men and women we have the duty as well as the privilege of talking with others, and we should talk as well as possible. In the long run few accomplishments will give us more pleasure and profit.



My Sister Eileen, Troupe 94, York Community High School, Elmhurst, Illinois,  
Doris E. White, Sponsor



## STUDENT RATE

(Continued from Page 10)

to income. Besides, it was good business to create a theater-going habit among these young people. And furthermore, we pointed out, there was nothing to lose, since they were selling only those seats from which they could get no revenue anyway. In short, they were actually increasing their income and even guaranteeing against loss by the option of withdrawing the unassigned part of the allotment when the ticket demand was too great.

Of course there were one or two shows which actually were going to be sellouts in advance. We insisted, however, that there at least be a token allotment for these, even if standing room had to be included. Students would not support a project, we argued, if they were not permitted to get tickets for the "hit" shows as well as for the others. Many a student rate ticket project has perished because hit shows would not cooperate. Furthermore, we said that the producers of the hit shows could better afford to invest some of their profits in a theater audience of the future.

In the beginning we did run into some difficulty. Any arrangement for reducing the price on tickets must be agreed to by not only the theater management but also the producer. Most of these details are handled by the producers' advance men who often have limited authority to make decisions. By the time the advance man could get the permission from the home office, it was too late to make the student rate offer. We therefore established the practice of writing directly to the producer as soon as a play was scheduled. We explained the project clearly and simply and requested his cooperation. Specifically we asked the producer to authorize his advance manager to enter into the student rate theater ticket arrangement with the theater owner. I cannot remember ever receiving a refusal, and in most cases we found that the advance agents had been properly instructed, thus making things easier for the theater owner, who did not have so much persuading to do.

Over the period of seven years nearly every producer of any reputation in New York has participated in our project, and it is no longer necessary to write letters to them. Producers are glad to cooperate, and the theater management is enthusiastic, to the extent that I have gotten telephone calls on occasion asking why the students did not use up their quota of tickets.

Establishing a quota was also something of a problem. During the first year our quotas were extremely low—averaging less than twenty-five per show. However, when we analyzed the actual theater attendance for the first year, we found that there had been 1223 unsold tickets during the season whereas we had only been allotted about 125. The

figures spoke for themselves and the allotment has been gradually increased so that we now range from 125 to 350 tickets per show. Usually the quota takes care of our needs.

Although conditions may vary in different cities where touring companies visit, there seems to be no logical reason why some kind of a student rate ticket plan could not be established almost everywhere. Most local theater owners should be receptive to the plan because they have virtually nothing to lose and everything to gain by it. A good approach is to examine the record of the past season to find out how many unsold tickets there were. If this information is not easily available locally you can find it in the road reports which appear in *VARIETY*. You can also get support for the project from local civic groups who will probably carry considerable influence with the theater management. As for the producers, they have already cooperated with Delaware and should be willing to cooperate elsewhere.

Unless the local theater is willing to handle the machinery of such a project, it is probable that some local group or school should undertake the responsibility. In Delaware we have an agency already established in the University of

Delaware Dramatic Center, an extension service in dramatics to the school, college, and community theater in the area. The agency is part of the Department of Dramatic Arts and Speech. The University is glad to handle the operation of the project because its students are given an opportunity to enrich their cultural experiences through attending professional theater to an extent not possible for students of many other colleges.

The Delaware plan was started as a pilot project. It has now proven its practicability and its worth. We hope others may find the inclination and the means to establish similar projects.

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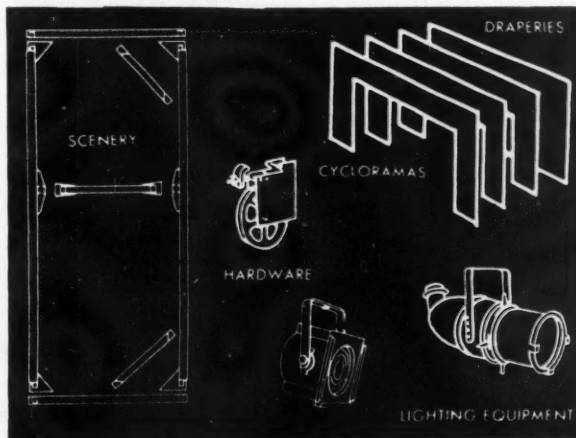
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# BRIEF VIEWS

By WILLARD FRIEDERICH



PAPERS ON ACTING, edited by Brander Matthews. 1958, Hill and Wang; 303 pp.

Another collection of historically significant essays on the theater by the late Prof. Matthews of Columbia University has been reissued by Dramabooks. The various attitudes toward and opinions of acting by such great actors as Coquelin, Talma, Irving, Fanny Kemble, Edwin Booth, and others are further analyzed in provocative introductions by such famous people as Henry James, George Arliss, Otis Skinner, and Lawrence Barrett. Some of the most famous ideas and phrases that have become a part of the theory of good theater can be discovered in these pages as they were first introduced to the public, such as William Gillette's "illusion of the first time" in acting, that ability of the actor to make the audience feel that he is experiencing the situation for the first time even though it is the hundredth performance. Where can one find a better definition of art (in all forms as well as the theater) than in Coquelin's assertion that art is "the interpretation of nature and of truth, more or less tinged by a peculiar light, which does not alter the proportions, but yet marks the salient features, heightens their colors, displays their fidelity to nature, so that our minds are more deeply and forcibly affected by them"? And, again, who would argue with his dictum that "we must not destroy all truth in the theater by too frequent use of conventions; but neither must we destroy the theatrical illusion by too great fidelity to fact."

The playwright-actor-director Boucicault may startle some with his statement that the first lesson an actor has to learn is not how to speak; "it is to learn to walk on the stage, stand still, and walk off again." And even he, known to us for what we today term his unrealistic "mellerdrammers," stoutly asserts that "the study of character should be from the inside; not from the outside." Here is a wealth of facts and ideas, including such fascinating papers as a first-hand account and analysis of the famous Sarah Siddons in her roles of Lady Macbeth and Queen Katharine, an explanation of the history and policies of the Comédie Française, evaluations of Edmund Kean and Junius Brutus Booth, etc. Though their products may have been different from ours today, their writings often sound surprisingly similar.

DIRECTING THE PLAY by John Wray Young. 1958, Harpers; 171 pp.

This is not what one may call a textbook in directing. There are no exercises, few offerings of a choice of methods that may produce the same result, a minimum of really detailed principles or rules of procedure to analyze and follow. How can there be when, for example, there are only half again as many pages devoted to the problem of characterization (15) as there are to the problem of memorization? This book is, rather, an informal, chatty, interesting personal account of the method that has proved useful to a good, successful director of one of America's most thriving community theaters (Shreveport, La.). At times the book is very practical and concrete in its instructions (such as how to use "sides" in rehearsals and memorization), whereas at other times basic fundamentals are pretty well glossed over (such as the chapter on blocking, in which there is no discussion as to the pace, direction, strength, or psychology of movement). For these reasons it is not unfair to say that the inexperienced director will get some practical advice in this book that he won't find in others, but that he will also miss discussion of many of the principles

of directing (for example, stage composition is not analyzed at all).

Your reviewer, however, found himself in agreement with many of Mr. Young's precepts: that holding sight-reading tryouts is better than trying out people for parts they had previously read and set their hearts on; that rough first blockings are purely mechanical to establish the traffic pattern of the play and that motivations and timing will be added later when the actor more fully understands the character and the play; that polishing does not begin until after blocking and memorization, which means that early rehearsals are done without actors understanding their characters fully; that for amateurs some feeling is constantly needed for good acting results, since their technique is rarely good enough to provide the audience with proper stimuli without real feeling; that one of the biggest and most important jobs is for the cast to realize how to give the center of attention to whom it belongs. Others of Mr. Young's beliefs are perhaps not so easily accepted: that blocking of the entire play takes place in preferably two or, at most, three consecutive rehearsals; that "sides" are more useful to an actor than the entire script; that prompting is never allowed. In summary, it seems reasonable that a beginning director who can get his theory of fundamentals from another source may find this more generalized commentary on how to run a play from its selection to its performance an excellent description of one method of putting the principles into actual practice.

A HANDBOOK FOR THE AMATEUR THEATER by Peter Cotes. 1957, Philosophical Library, Inc.; 424 pp.

Mr. Cotes, a professional theater and television producer in England and, at times, in the United States, has written a book for the amateur theater group that is in several ways somewhat different from similar books in our own country. First, the book is aimed primarily at civic rather than educational theaters, although, naturally, many of the suggestions apply equally to either type organization. Second, Mr. Cotes frequently uses the history of both amateur and professional theater to give foundation to his remarks about the playwright, the producer, the actor, and the audience, thus establishing an aura of sound tradition that is comforting to an amateur who, without such knowledge, may feel he is working in a vacuum.

Much of the book is spent in discussing such items as forming an amateur society, children's theater, and drama festivals (so much more prevalent for adult amateurs in England than in the U. S.), and in listing organizations that give help to amateur theater societies and all the major civic theaters in England and the entire Commonwealth. While the latter information will usually be useless to American groups, it nevertheless remains the only complete printed source of such information for anyone who wants to study it. The book is completed by short but fairly good chapters that evaluate the most commonly used principles in areas like business management, publicity, state management, set and costume design, set building, properties and sound effects, lighting, make-up, and dance. As may be expected, some of this latter information is peculiar to English production methods and materials and will not be particularly apropos to our groups (for example, the latest lighting and make-up equipment is not included), but much of it is valuable. Lists of "do's and don'ts" are clear and sound; and, quite frequently, Mr. Cotes' working rules strike a most responsive chord

in your reviewer; for example, in comparing the theories of starting rehearsals with prolonged discussions of the play or with blocking of the action, Mr. Cotes says, "There are certain 'arty crafty' elements in the theater who would talk for weeks before getting down to the physical business of acting. It is noticeable in these cases that the discussions are more impressive, as a rule, than the performance."

The style is informal and interesting. Many special aids are likewise included: glossary of terms; illustrations (both cuts and photographs) of equipment, make-up, and major historical periods of costuming, among others; theater publications, suppliers, and bibliography.

FOREIGN DIALECTS by Lewis and Marguerite Herman. 1943, Theater Arts Books; 415 pp.

Out of print for about a decade, this magnificent aid to the actor and director has again been re-issued. There are no changes; but, for those who were not familiar with the original printing, there are chapters on all the obvious dialects, from Cockney through all the European national dialects, the Japanese and Chinese, and even such unusual ones as Pidgin English, Hawaiian, and the South Sea and Pacific Island forms of broken English. Each dialect is thoroughly illustrated and discussed, the authors explaining its lilt, emphasis, peculiarities of sound or pronunciation, and general rules of pronunciation, and providing drill exercises of commonly encountered words, vowel changes, consonant changes, grammatical principles, typical expressions and interjections, and sentences and monologues. Use of phonetic symbols and actual musical notation to show melody will not make the book easy to use for some, but the fact remains that there is no easy way to understand and develop a dialect. It is a miracle that any book can exist that can make so plain on paper what normally appeals only to the ear.

A MANUAL FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE THEATRICAL ADMINISTRATION by Whitney R. Sponsler. 1956, American Legitimate Theater Service, 6000 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood 28, Calif.; 67 pp.

This mimeographed manual on administration of the educational theater fills a rather obvious hole in the welter of literature on theater production for amateurs. The writer, who has worked in both the educational and professional theater, makes many practical suggestions for the conduct of the production, ticket, house, business, refreshment, and promotional managers (the latter post includes the handling of programs, advertising, tickets, and general public relations). The author's titles for these various positions may not always coincide with the vocabulary of others, but his principles and procedures usually will apply. If one wants information on ticket printing, reservations, design of ticket racks, amusement taxes, program design and editing, news stories, direct-mail promotion, advertising stunts and methods, and so on, this manual will have something to say about it. Additional advantages are that the various standard business report forms illustrated in the book are available from the publisher at a very nominal fee and that purchasers of the book are entitled to two free consultation services: one, an evaluation of the programs previously used by the group; and two, an evaluation of the material used in their direct-mail campaigns.

TEEN-AGE PLAYS FOR ALL OCCASIONS by Mildred Hark and Noel McQueen. 1957, Plays, Inc.; 465 pp.

Twenty-two plays for slightly older children, junior and senior high, and averaging twenty-five to thirty minutes, with most of the casts calling for from four to ten (a few take more). Plots all revolve around the more obvious holidays and occasions. All have simple sets, usually living rooms.



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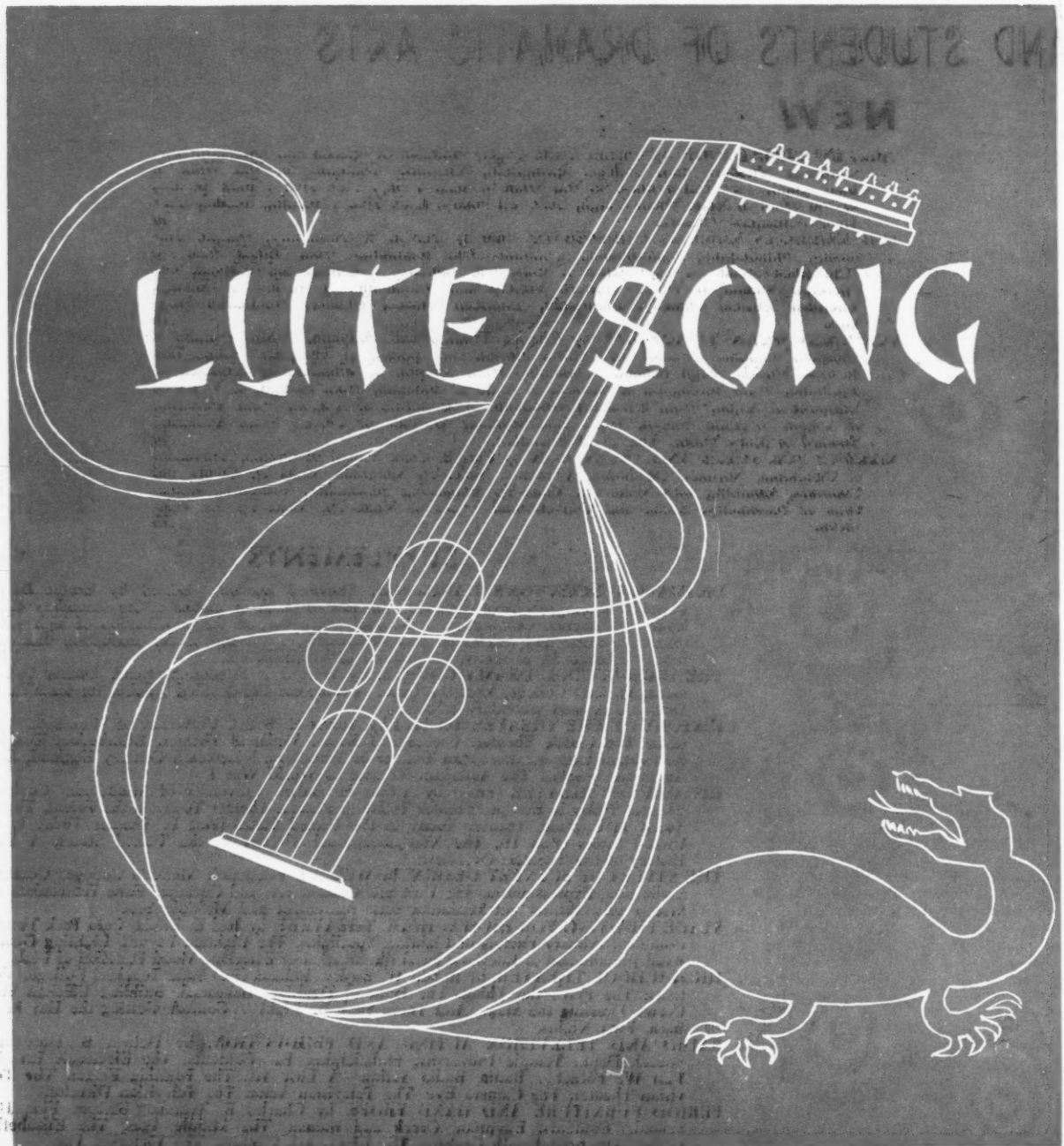
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